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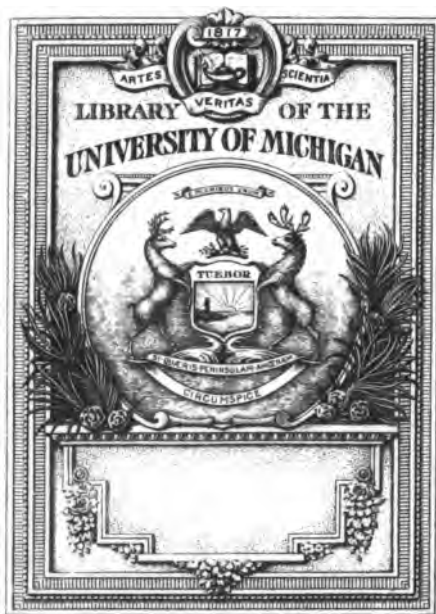
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THE GIFT OF
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SOUL-WINNING: .

A COURSE OF FOUR LECTURES DELIVERED UNDER THE
AUSPICES OF THE

THEOLOGICAL UNION OF VICTORIA UNIVERSITY,

COBOURG,

FEBRUARY, 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th, 1883,

ENTITLED RESPECTIVELY

'STUDENT,' 'PREACHER,' 'PASTOR' AND 'SOUL-WINNER.'

BY H. F. BLAND.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

THE REV. N. BURWASH, S.T.D.,

Professor of Theology in Victoria University.

TORONTO:

WILLIAM BRIGGS,

78 & 80 KING STREET EAST.

C. W. COATES, MONTREAL.

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1883.

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Mrs Sidney Thompson
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INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

THE lectures presented to the reader in this little volume are the first-fruits of a laudable enterprise of the Theological Union of Victoria University. In several of the leading Theological Schools of this continent, an effort is being made to combine with the scholastic work of the stated professor, the ripe experience and original ideas of men fresh from the pastoral and pulpit work. The famous Yale Lectures on Preaching, the special courses in the Boston University, and the Annual Lectures before the Alumni of the Garrett Biblical Institute, are examples of marked success in this method of instruction. During the past year, through the liberality of the Theological Union, we have been able to make a beginning in the same direction. The lecturer, the Rev. H. F. Bland, ex-President of the Montreal Conference, was selected by the suffrages of the members of the Union at their last annual meeting, as one specially eminent for the success of his work both in the pulpit and in all the various departments of pastoral labour. His lectures condense for us the maxims and principles which have guided his own life-work, and illustrate them with rich and rare felicity from the living examples of the greatest names in Methodist history. In fact, we think we unveil the secret of Mr. Bland's success in his own work, when we say that he evidently has studied the lives of these men, who were so distinguished

J. A.

by the Divine blessing upon their work, with a sympathetic power of seizing their best methods and practical ideas.

The lectures were attended with great profit and pleasure by our entire class of forty or forty-five students for the ministry, and also by Christian workers and ministers from the town and the surrounding country. It is hoped that in the present form they will be of even more permanent use to hundreds who could not listen to the living voice. The Church needs to-day a ministry not only endowed with all learning, but also gifted with the power to turn to advantage all the living forces of the age. The preacher who irrigates with the Water of Life all the varied fields of everyday human life, and who so skilfully sows in those fields the seed of truth that the harvest is not merely a few special religious exercises and professions, but an abundant yield of happier homes, more honest business, and kindlier sympathies between man and man, is the man of real success in this practical age. We want Mr. Wesley's "Scriptural Holiness" permeating the whole fabric of human society with its hallowing influence, and raising every individual man and woman to a life more truly noble, loving, and holy. The work by which this is accomplished is not a showy work. It is the result of the painstaking fidelity and toil and prayer of years, and it waits for its reward from the Master Himself. To such workers we believe many of the counsels of this little book will be as "Apples of gold in pictures of silver."

N. BURWASH.

UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA COLLEGE,
Cobourg, April, 1883.

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LECTURE I.

STUDENT.

SOUL-WINNING.

LECTURE I.—STUDENT.

STRANGERS visiting Montreal usually take a drive round the Mountain. The views from the summit are exceedingly fine. The majestic St. Lawrence stretches from west to east, through the level, rich landscape, like a broad ribbon of silver. In the extreme south, the green mountains of Vermont and the wild peaks of the Adirondac range, in New York State, on a clear day, are distinctly outlined. Looking north, the eye wanders over a fine champaign country, well settled, and well-churched so far as Romanism is concerned, for the tin spires of its ecclesiastical edifices may be seen coruscating in every part of the wide expanse. About 45 miles distant, this rich, open country is bounded by an extensive mountain range, the jagged peaks of which form the horizon from east to west as far as the eye can reach.

It is scarcely necessary for me to say that those mountain peaks form part of the great Laurentian chain, which runs across the entire country from the Ottawa river to Belle Isle Straits. That wild, broken region, so interesting to the geologist, the naturalist, and the lover of the picturesque, has been called the back bone of Eastern Canada. Not a good farming region, by the way. Rather too cold and bony for that. There are occasional flats and stretches, however, which are exceedingly rich in depth and quality of soil, and which *make* the men who are so fortunate as to settle upon them, but which are too occasional to give an agricultural character to the district. Rocks are there, immense masses of huge boulders,—precipices are there, some of them sinking sheer down scores of feet,—lakes are there, of unknown depth and exquisite beauty, placid, pellucid, abounding with fish,—immense swells and conical-shaped hills; and in the interior of the district, mountains majestically tower, clothed to the summit with primitive forest, and there roam at pleasure the bear, the raccoon, the lynx, and other animals common to a Canadian wilderness.

But perhaps you say, What of all this? Well, this wild, picturesque region formed part of my first Canadian mission, and I refer to this fact at the outset of my remarks as furnishing some apology for my presuming to address you on topics connected with the ministry. Your work is my work, and whatever may be the character of your future as ministers of the

Methodist Church,—however laborious or unassuming, I am prepared to sympathize with it. I distinctly remember standing on the mountain just named, and gazing with admiration upon the magnificent view, permitting my eye to linger upon the distant Laurentians, not knowing then, that for the next two years my mission work would be so intimately connected with them. So, however, it happened. I was sent to the St. Andrew's Mission, a field of toil by no means virgin. In 1800, eighty-two years ago, when Canada proper had only three circuits, a fourth was formed on the banks of the Ottawa, called the Grand River or Ottawa Circuit. A number of American settlers had taken land in this tract of country, and the New York Conference sent a missionary among them of the name of Pickett. This was the first ministerial appointment to Lower Canada. Neither Quebec nor Montreal had a place at that day on Methodist Minutes. The morning of the mission was gone, and I had almost said that its noonday was gone, for it was said to be more capable and vigorous twenty years before, when Asahel Hurlburt and Stephen Brownell labored upon it, than at the time to which I now refer. Many noble old Methodist families had moved toward the setting sun, and, as a consequence, what should have been a circuit a quarter of a century before I saw it, was still only a mission, requiring two missionaries to work it, with resources barely sufficient for the necessities of one.

This, in conjunction with my estimable colleague,

was the sphere of my appointment, now nearly twenty-five years ago. The work was hard, but sweet. *I was a missionary.* That was the charm. That was the philosopher's stone which gave to the incidents of my daily life, a preciousness more than golden. When I was a mere youth, the uppermost desire of my heart was to be a missionary. This feeling had grown with me, and though actively engaged for some years in a local capacity, it was not until I reached the St. Andrew's Mission that I felt that the dream of my youth was realised—that I was in reality what I had so frequently longed to be, a Methodist missionary, and that my emphatic business, like that of my great missionary Master, was to seek and save the lost. I envy not the feelings of that messenger of the Cross who derives no inspiration from his vocation. For years previous to my being actually set apart to the work, there were times when I felt myself almost compelled to discontinue reading the monthly Missionary Notices, from a feeling of irrepressible sadness. Mission work met my yearning; and when amongst the wildest defiles of the St. Andrew's Mission, riding from the house of one hardy settler to another, I could say, "I am a missionary," equally as enthusiastically as Correggio could say, "I am a painter," while gazing with swelling bosom and dilating eye upon the works of the old masters in one of the galleries of Imperial Rome.

That feeling, thank God, has remained with me. My appointments have varied in type, but my vocation

has always been an inspiration ; and whether in town or country, the locality for the time being assigned to me, has always seemed to me the most desirable under the heavens. I must say that your invitation to visit you surprised me, and its acceptance involved a responsibility from which I shrank, but if, as a fellow-workman in the bonds of this ministry, I can be of any service to those now listening to me, I shall not forget to thank God for the opportunity.

It has occurred to me, that addressing you as *students, preachers, pastors, and soul-winners*, I might say all that it is needful for me to say. In the present lecture I shall confine myself to the first of these designations.

Before, however, adverting to the work of the student, let me name some things which the ministry evidently implies, and which it may not be out of place to name now. It implies, 1. *Alienation between God and man* : God needs to be reconciled to man,—man needs to be reconciled to God. Sin has come between the two. God, full of pity, man, full of guilt ; but without the intervention of a third party, no available principle of reconciliation between them. 2. It implies, secondly, a *Reconciler*,—one upon whom the guilt of sin has been laid, thereby reconciling God to man, absolutely so in the case of those who have not sinned personally,—conditionally so in the case of those who have, and do. 3. It implies, thirdly, *Ambassadorship*,—an ambassadorship involving personal reconciliation and a commission to preach. 4. It implies,

fourthly, a *Divinely authenticated and plenarily inspired Bible*,—a Bible, the authority of which is ultimate and infallible. Our standard as preachers is not a subjective one: what *we* think ought to be, but objective, what the Bible says *is*. 5. It implies, still further, *the Presence and Power of the Holy Spirit*,—as the promise of the Father, the gift of the Son, and the only efficient agent of a living and successful ministry. In the absence of these primal truths, the functions of the ministry, as we understand it, have no existence.

By what, then, ought the work of the Student to be marked? And I hope that in dealing with this topic, in this presence, to be saved from presumption. 1. I may safely say, however, that the mental culture of the student ought to be *broad*,—it ought to be many-sided. An educated Canada claims this of her present day preachers. The days of Jack Cade are happily gone. English historians tell us that in the reign of the 6th Henry, an insurrection took place, one object of which was to dethrone the king; the other, to put an effectual stop to all such heresy as paper manufacturing, type founding, printing, and learning! One poor man was pounced upon by the rebels while in the act of setting a few boys their copies, with the laudable intention of teaching them to write, and without further provocation he was hanged upon the nearest tree, with his pen and inkhorn about his neck, as a villain, a traitor, and a conjuror! Another individual, a nobleman, was beheaded, because he had taken a similar interest in

the rising generation. The charge brought against this nobleman was one of the most extraordinary the world ever heard of. Jack Cade, the leader of the insurgents, and for the time being the mouth-piece of the people, was the sapient personage who preferred the charge. It ran thus, "Thou hast most traitorously corrupted the youth of the realm in erecting,"—What? A temple of vice and demoralisation? No.—"By erecting a Grammar School; and whereas before our forefathers had no other books but the score and tally, thou hast caused printing to be used; and contrary to the king's crown and dignity, thou hast built a paper mill. Moreover, it will be proved to thy face, that thou hast men about thee that talk about nouns and verbs, and such abominable words as no Christian can endure to hear." Jack Cade would have found the atmosphere of Cobourg anything but genial!

The claims and advantages of a liberal and generous education are yearly becoming better understood, more clearly defined, and more thoroughly appreciated. Artificial distinctions are gradually giving way before so legitimate a competitor. The mere accidents of the man sway less; the quality and muscle of the mind more. The truth of Dr. Watts' well-known lines commends itself to an ever-widening suffrage. The Bishop of London of the Doctor's time was said to be a tall, rather imposing-looking man; the Doctor, on the other hand, was small, if not slightly deformed,—by no means impressive in his appearance. The literary fame of the latter led the former to wish for an intro-

duction. One day, being in a bookseller's shop in the city, and inspecting a work of the Doctor's placed on the counter, he expressed his wish to the bookseller. To his agreeable surprise, he was informed that he could be gratified in that particular with the greatest ease, as the Doctor was then in an adjoining room correcting proof for the press. The bookseller threw open the door and then, with the usual formality, introduced the two. When the Bishop saw the somewhat insignificant-looking man before him, he was startled, and doubtless his countenance betrayed his astonishment. Dr. Watts saw it, and as though the same inspiration came over him, which had manifested itself somewhat memorably on a former occasion, when his father threatened to chastise him for youthful, and as he supposed premature verse-making, he exclaimed, impromptu,

“ Were I so tall to reach the pole,
Or grasp the ocean in a span,
I would be measured by my soul—
The mind's the standard of the man.”

The Bishop, convinced by this admirable impromptu, if by nothing else, as to the character of the personage before him, instantly extended his hand, and cordially exclaimed, “I now perceive that it really is Dr. Watts.”

How far the pulpit may legitimately “intermeddle with all wisdom,” is a question that must be decided by judgment, taste, and position. There is, however, no form of truth but may contribute to its wealth and augment its power. The sermon may sweep the entire

circle of human information, and at the most remote point—the most out of the way region—find appropriate tribute and homage. The science of modern times may presume to relegate Theology to a secondary position, and decree that its utterances shall be those of whispering humbleness, but the science of Divinity, by a loftier pedigree, must ever hold the sceptre,—like the sheaf in Joseph's dream, around which the other sheaves were arranged, and to which they did obeisance; so the great topic of the pulpit is queen, and receives from every form of wisdom, "gold and frankincense and myrrh." Adam Clarke, while stationed on the coast of Normandy as a missionary, discharging laboriously circuit duties, managed to obtain possession of Walton's Polyglot Bible,—struck out into the study of Chaldee and Syriac, and by "committing to paper memoranda for notes on the Gospels," laid the foundation of his Commentary on the Bible, which is, and will continue to be, a monument of sound scholarship and luminous piety. Dr. Joseph Beaumont, with whom for a few years I had the honour of a personal acquaintance, and whom I regarded in his day as the prince of preachers, revealed by the exhaustless wealth of his rhetorical analogies, the multiplied diversity of his acquirements. Lord Lytton, in one of his earlier essays, "On the Passion for the Universal," in his own graceful and finished way, illustrates the advantages of a broad, miscellaneous culture. "Perhaps," he says, "no men are more superficial in their views than those who

cultivate one branch of learning, and only one branch ; —perhaps no men are less superficial than those who know the outlines of many. A man, indeed, who in letters or statesmanship cultivates *only* one pursuit, can rarely master it thoroughly. It is by eternal comparisons of truth with truth, that we come to just and profound conclusions: the wider the range of comparisons, the more accurate our inferences." Speaking of Milton, he adds, "What a wonderful copiousness of all knowledge, seemingly the most motley, the most incongruous, he has poured into his great poem! Perhaps there is no mighty river of genius which is not fed by a thousand tributary streams. Milton is, indeed, an august example of the aspiration to the universal. This severe republican, who has come down to the vulgar gaze in colours so stern, though so sublime, had, in his earlier tendencies, all that most distinguishes our ideal of the knight and cavalier. No man in these later days was ever, by soul and nature, so entirely the all-accomplished and consummate gentleman. Beautiful in person—courtly in address—skilled in the gallant exercise of arms—a master of each manlier as each softer art—versed in music, in song, in the languages of Europe—the admired gallant of the dames and nobles of Italy—the cynosure of all eyes 'that rained influence and adjudged'—he, the destined Dante of England, was the concentration of our dreams of the troubadour, and the reality of the imaginary Crichton. In his later life we find the haughty patriot recurring, with a patrician pride, to

all the accomplishments he had mastered—the sword as well as lute; and if we could furnish forth the outline of the education he prescribes as necessary to others, we should have no reason to complain that the versatility and the range of Athenian genius had passed away.”

2. Again, the work of the student ought to be marked by *discrimination* and *system*. These terms, though diverse, are nearly related, and therefore I bracket them. By *discrimination*, I mean the judgment which assigns to each branch of study its relative position as to thought and time; and by *system*, the art of making miscellaneous studies beneficial and up-building. Take the first. A youthful student, with the best of motives, may give an undue prominence to theological studies of a questionable character. He wishes not only to be familiar with the standard works of orthodoxy, but to know what those which are less so, as well as those which are positively divergent, have to say. There is something piquant and stimulating in studies of this character, and, within suitable limits, proper,—the danger lies in giving undue prominence to them. A wise discrimination is needed. Familiarity with error is insidious. There is an unconscious fascination about it, and before the student is aware, he is drifting toward “sunless gulfs of doubt.” The syren of error has quietly loosed the moorings. He never dreamt it, but it comes about.

The autobiography of Joseph Barker, for some years a New Connexion Methodist minister of considerable

repute, moving in the best English circuits, subsequently an infidel lecturer of the Ingersoll stamp, on both sides of the Atlantic, is very monitory. Any young minister of brisk mental action and outlook, may consult this autobiography with advantage.

On page 363, he writes, "It is often said by Christians, that the reason why persons doubt the existence of God and a future life, is, that they have good cause to dread them; or, as Grotius expresses it, that they live in such a way that it would be to their interest that there should be no God or future life. This was not the case with me. My unbelief came upon me while diligently striving in all things to do God's will. My virtue outlived my faith. While a Christian, all that the world could promise or bestow seemed to be within my reach. Friends, popularity, wealth, power, fame, and visions of infinite usefulness to others, and of unbounded happiness to myself in the future, were all promised me as the reward of continued devotion to the cause of God and Christianity. As the reward of heresy and unbelief, I had to encounter suspicion, desertion, hatred, reproach, persecution, want, grief of friends and kindred, anxious days and sleepless nights, and almost every extreme of mental anguish.

"It was, then, in no light mood that I gave up my faith in God, and Christianity, and immortality. The change in my views was no headlong, hasty freak. It was the result of long and serious thought; of *misguided*, but honest, conscientious study."

Speaking of the Unitarians, amongst whom he

gradually found himself, he says (p. 281): "I had not mingled long with the Unitarians before I found that they differed from one another very much in their views. Some few were Arian, some were Socinian, and some quite Latitudinarian. Some admired Priestley and some Carpenter, some Channing and some Parker. Some looked on Channing as an old foggy, and said there was not an advanced or progressive idea in his writings; while others thought that every thing beyond Channing bordered on the regions of darkness and death. Some looked on the Scriptures as of Divine authority, and declared their readiness to believe whatever they could be proved to teach; others regarded the Scriptures as of no authority whatever, and declared their determination to accept no views but such as could be proved to be true, independent of the Bible. Some believed Jesus to be a supernatural person commissioned by God to give a supernatural revelation of truth and duty. * * * Others looked on Christ as the natural result of the moral developement of our race, like Bacon, Shakespeare, or Baxter. They looked on miracles, as impossible, and regarded all Bible accounts of them as fables.

"Down this incline I gradually slid, till I reached at last the land of doubt and unbelief. My descent was very slow. It took me several years to pass from the more moderate to the more extravagant forms of Unitarianism.

"When I first read the works of Dr. Channing,

though I was delighted beyond measure with many portions of his writings, I had a great dislike for some of his remarks about Christ and the atonement. And when I first resolved to publish an edition of his works, I intended to add notes, with a view to neutralize the tendency of his objectionable views; but by the time I got his works into the press, those views appeared objectionable no longer. I still, however, regarded portions of Theodore Parker's works with horror, and I resolved, that if ever I published an edition of *his* works, I should add a refutation of his revolting extravagances. Yet time, and intercourse with the more advanced Unitarians, brought me in a few years to look on Parker as my model man." Barker was eventually restored to the faith of the Bible and his mother; but it is supposed that he shortened the closing years of his life by his anxiety to undo, by preaching and correspondence, the mischief which his scepticism had done.

Methodist theology, and we speak it without presumption, is to the Church of this day, *standard time*. Quebecers almost involuntarily take out their watches when the noon-day gun booms over the city; and just now many time-pieces, not Methodist, are being quietly regulated by the meridian of Arminianism. Whatever place the Methodist student may sub-ordinately give to external theological writings, his own comfort and usefulness demand, that the "form of sound words" contained in the standards of his own church, should discriminatingly occupy the first place.

With *Discrimination* we must associate *System*. What student has not felt mentally dyspeptic after a course of magazine and newspaper reading? Tempted by the variety, and laudably desirous of keeping abreast of the times, he finds that the effort has a tendency to dissipate and weaken rather than tonify and invigorate. Robertson, of Brighton, writing to a friend, says: "Multifarious reading weakens the mind more than doing nothing, for it becomes a necessity at last, like smoking, and is an excuse for the mind to be dormant; while thought is poured in and runs through, a clear stream, on unproductive gravel, on which not even mosses grow. It is the idlest of all idleness, and leaves more of impotency than any other. I know what reading is, for I could read once, and did. I read hard or not at all—never skimming, never turning aside to merely inviting books; and Plato, Aristotle, Butler, Thucydides, Sterne, Jonathan Edwards have passed like the iron atoms of the blood into my mental constitution."

By *System*, then, as a corrective to this form of desultoriness, I mean the habit of selecting and classifying. The late Sir James Stephen, in a very sensible and instructive lecture delivered before the Young Men's Christian Association, London, in 1853, and published in the Exeter Hall Series, illustrates this habit something in this way. If you take three maps of the world, one constructed in America, another in England, and another in France, you will find that while the latitude, or the lines which run parallel

with the Equator, are the same in each map, the longitude, or the lines which run from pole to pole, are different in all three. How is this? Because each nation has its own Observatory, and the meridian line is drawn from that point. So that when a geographer of any one of these nations looks at his globe, he ascertains the position of each spot on the earth's surface with reference, as it may happen, either to Greenwich, or to Paris, or to Washington. His own national meridian line is the basis of all his measurements.

Allow me, in passing, to give you here not a bad *bon mot*, which is said to have emanated from a somewhat high quarter. At the election of '68, W. E. Gladstone, the "grand old man" of this day, in consequence of his Irish Church intentions, was rejected by South Lancashire; but Greenwich, a third-rate borough, nobly made way for him. Some one was expressing his regret at Mr. Gladstone's defeat in Lancashire, and his having to put up with the representation of an inferior constituency. "I don't see," replied the personage* alluded to, "how we could do better than as we have always done—take the time of day from Greenwich."

But to return. I was saying that the English, French, and American Geographer has his own national meridian line, which he makes the basis of all his measurements. So with reference to the world of mind, every man must have his own line of meridian.

* Then Archbishop Manning.

He must make one object of study prominent, and as there is a relationship, more or less intimate, between all departments of truth, he must group, so to speak, every other object of pursuit round the leading one. Sir James Stephen being, at the time alluded to, Professor of Modern History in the University of Cambridge, very naturally recommended "Modern History" as a leading object of study. The currier said, "Nothing like leather." Sir James, after facetiously alluding to this adage, luminously proceeds to justify his selection by shewing how every other pursuit, literary, scientific, professional, or mercantile, may be brought into harmony with this meridian line.

I would, however, leave it to every man to select his own prominent study, according to his natural leaning and pursuit. The pulpit, I need scarcely say, has been my own meridian line for many years, and the whole of my reading and researches have been classified in relation to this. The statesman may take political economy; the philosopher, science, either general or particular; the philanthropist, statistics of immorality and crime; the man of business, any mental pursuit for which he has the most leaning. The object gained by this method is to acquire the habit of classification. As the store-keeper has a box for this, and a department for the other; a shelf for this, and a drawer for that, so that he can almost find in the dark anything that he may require—so the meridian line gives orderliness to the most desultory reading. Where there is not this habit and power of classification, the mind

may be full of valuables, but they are all in a state of hopeless confusion. Dry goods and soft goods promiscuously thrown together, and neither shelf nor drawer in the whole store.

The more a man reads where this law of disorder holds, and the more he muddles his own mental repository. He may put an encyclopædia within him, and thereby make himself a *learned* man, but he is not necessarily an *educated* one. Education is what the man does for himself, and what no external agency can do for him. But where this habit prevails of systematically putting every thing to its place, and making it illustrative of some prominent object of study, a man may read anything that comes to hand, and for which he has a healthy inclination, and he will make it contribute in some way to his own mental amplitude and wealth. He may venture to adopt the pleasant canon, which, it is said, Dr. Samuel Johnson once laid down—"Read the book you do earnestly feel a wish and curiosity to read." The great lexicographer must have been in a very genial humour when he said that. The healthy, systematic man, however, may adopt it, and he will not go far astray. A philanthropist of great intellectual power, once said to me, "As I came by *rail* to-day I read so-and-so in the newspaper. The newspaper supplies me with the raw cotton, out of which I spin the fabric of my speeches." Dr. Chalmers' previous researches in political economy and physics, materially contributed to the grandeur of his pulpit orations, when he was de-

scribing the wisdom and goodness of God. I may here state that I have found *system*, as applied to dates, very interesting and instructive. Take any date, and let the memory associate with it all the contemporaneous events it can summon. Meeting the other day with a reference to Pocahontas, the Indian princess, and the year 1613, instantly James I., the then recent translation of the Bible, and the position of the Pilgrim Fathers "on the other side of the flood," were suggested to me. And so with reference to any other date, especially those which link themselves with the great events in history.

3. Again, the student, in order to be successful, will find it needful to be *thorough*. And what I mean by thoroughness is positively mastering everything we profess to acquire. And this cannot be done without labour. One of the most difficult and yet one of the most indispensable of mental acquirements is concentration. One of the Professors of McGill, recently gave it as his opinion that the difference between a great man and a small one, was the presence or absence of the power of concentration. The mind is naturally very elastic, very ethereal, fond of variety,—it delights in skipping from leaf to leaf, and from flower to flower. It has no objection to look at a thing so long as the novelty lasts, but when that is gone it becomes quite uneasy to be off again. This butterfly tendency is a great enemy to self-culture. The mind needs to be trained to habits of steady, patient, persevering thought; and those of you who have sought this,

know that it is not easy of accomplishment. There is a good deal of obstinate self-will about the mind when it first feels the curb of discipline. Still the training is something that must be done: hard thought and diligent application are indispensable to success.

"It may seem very easy for the accomplished musician to finger the keys of his instrument: There is so much rapidity and precision and naturalness about it. It may seem easy for the artist to throw his creations upon canvass, and as you watch the magic brush, it almost seems to develop the thing of beauty without an effort. It may seem easy for the practised and skilful speaker to clothe his thoughts in graceful and appropriate language,—there is such an effective and ready extemporaneousness about him, that you are inclined to think that you have only to stand up and do the same thing." But the assay in each case would effectually break the spell. Some time ago, in the State of New Hampshire, a new bridge had to be opened, and a young lawyer was invited to deliver an oration. The lawyer was quite green as a public speaker, for though he had been in practice a short time, he had not had the honour of being retained in a single instance. The day came, and with it, to the bridge, came the multitude and the orator. He had made no written preparation, as he was told that was unlawyer-like,—a lawyer being supposed to be capable of speaking without notes or notice any number of hours, on any subject, in a style of thrilling

eloquence. Presuming, then, on his profession, our orator trusted to the occasion. He stood out upon the platform, and amid the profound attention of his audience, commenced, "Fellow-citizens, five and forty years ago, this bridge, built by your enterprise, was part and parcel of the howling wilderness." He paused a moment. "Yes, fellow-citizens, only five and forty years ago, this bridge, where we now stand, was part and parcel of the howling wilderness." He paused again. (Cries of "Good! go on.") Here was the rub. "I feel it hardly necessary to repeat, that this bridge, fellow-citizens, five and forty years ago, was part and parcel of this howling wilderness, and I will conclude by saying, that I wish it was part and parcel of it now."

Let us then, my fellow-students, bear in mind, that ease and power in any acquirement, be it ever so simple, is the result of labour and earnest concentration. Without it, our mental showiness will be likely to be nothing more than surfaceism. The late Lord Brougham, in an address which he delivered in St. George's Hall, Bradford, Yorks, in October, 1859, said, "that he never counted one hour or one moment his own, to use as a means of amusement or relaxation, even for his instruction, out of the profession to which he belonged, whatever that might be at the time, until the day's work was completely, honestly, and accurately performed." It is said that the late Sir Fowell Buxton, who was a striking instance himself of extraordinary application, once asked Sir Edward

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Sugden, if he could explain the cause of his remarkable rise in his profession, and he received this instructive answer: "When beginning to read law, I resolved to make everything I acquired perfectly my own, and never to go to a second thing till I had entirely accomplished the first. Many of my competitors read as much in a day as I read in a week, but at the end of twelve months, my knowledge was as fresh as on the day on which it was acquired, while theirs had glided away from their recollection." Alexander Hamilton once said to an intimate friend, "Men give me some credit for genius. All the genius I have lies in just this: when I have a subject in hand, I study it profoundly. Day and night it is before me. I explore it in all its bearings. My mind becomes pervaded with it. Then the efforts which I make, the people are pleased to call the fruits of genius. They are the fruit of labour and thought." Daniel Webster replied to a gentleman, who pressed him to speak on a subject of great importance: "The subject interests me deeply, but I have not time. There, sir," pointing to a huge pile of letters on the table, "is a pile of unanswered letters, to which I must reply before the close of the session" (which was three days off). "I have no time to master the subject so as to do it justice." "But, Mr. Webster, a few words from you would do much to awaken public attention to it." "If there is so much weight in my word as you represent," replied the statesman, "it is because I do not allow myself to speak on any subject, until my

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mind is imbued with it." Demosthenes, being once urged to speak on a great and sudden emergency, obstinately refused, and said, "I am not prepared." Thoroughness was an important element in the greatness of these distinguished men. Their thoughts, naturally vagrant, and their will, prone to vacillate, had been schooled to obedience and concentration.

4. But, again, another element in successful culture, one somewhat ordinary in pretension, and therefore in danger of losing its legitimate significance, is that of *Perseverance*. Perseverance has no proxy. The most inventive genius in this age of inventions cannot find a substitute for it. Neither a Telford nor a Stephenson can remedy the difficulties of the ascent. Uphill it has always been, and uphill it will continue to be until the *excelsior* of a loftier life shall gleam upon the eye of the saintly climber. Modern appliances may have smoothed the path a little, but still the rugged and precipitous formation of the hill cannot be surmounted without a considerable expenditure of toil. "The powers of most men are stronger than their perseverance. Where one fails for want of intellectual ability, two fail for want of continued exertion in the use of their faculties. Intellectual power can be acquired almost illimitably. Failure is more an error of time than a short coming of weakness. Infinitude alone seems to be the limit of his progress, whose power of will enables him to endure pain and conquer suffering in advancing."

I once heard of a painter who inscribed upon his

easel, "Try again," so that if he should happen to fail in any of his efforts, this salutary motto, confronting his eye, should shame him out of his despondency and prompt him to renewed exertion. During the French Revolution, an English drummer was taken prisoner by the enemy. The French officer, into whose presence he was taken, commanded him to beat a retreat. The young fellow, with a good deal of simplicity, said "That he did not know what a retreat was; he had never been taught to drum that." Retreat forms no part of our instructions. A passionate desire, and an unwearied will, can almost accomplish impossibilities; and the man who not only strikes the iron while it is hot, but, as some one has it, strikes till it is made hot, has a soul capable of surmounting every thing surmountable. The peroration of Lord Brougham's speech, in defence of Queen Caroline, as an instance of his fastidious taste as well as unconquerable perseverance, was written and re-written no fewer than fourteen times.

Some 98 years ago, "a young shoemaker might have been seen wearily threading the cross country roads near Northampton. Newly risen from a sick bed, he was trying to earn bread for himself and wife by vending his hobnailed wares to the ploughmen and shepherds. But there glowed in his bosom a fire which age and poverty were not able to quench—an immortal spark of heaven's own kindling—the love of knowledge, and a longing to do good. In yonder lane he has set down his sackful of shoes, whilst, with glis-

tening eye, he examines some wonderful weed, or conveys into the crown of his hat some great flapping moth, whose slumbers he has surprised in the hedge-row. And, now, that it is evening, he turns aside into some friendly cottage, and with a brother theologian discusses some deep question in divinity, or propounds to him his visionary scheme of going to preach the Gospel to the Hindoos, till the household goes to bed; and then over his Latin rudiments, or a grammar of geography, the studious pedlar burns out his hoarded candle end. But time passed on, and the inquisitive lad, who used to gather flowers and insects along the Nen, was the fellow of learned societies, and a high name among eastern naturalists. Time passed on, and the starving artisan, who learned his Latin from a borrowed grammar, was the chief of Oriental linguists, and enjoyed the rare renown of a Sanscrit professor. Time passed on, and the obscure missionary, who smuggled a clandestine entrance to Bengal, and was driven forth like an outlaw, had become the guest of Governors' General, and one of the most influential residents in India. Time passed on, and the Utopian evangelist, who set out amid the jeers of the worldly, and the silence of the churches, saw the great peninsula studded with mission stations, whilst, with paternal pleasure, his eye surveyed the Bible in thirty eastern versions, all of them either more or less the memorials of his matchless industry. And to what did William Carey owe all this? For that was the man. What was his peculiar genius? What was his lucky

star? We accept his own explanation, and offer it to all who are pursuing knowledge under difficulties. 'Whoever gives me credit for being a plodder, will describe me justly. Any thing beyond that will be too much. I can plod. I can persevere in any definite pursuit; and to this I owe every thing.'

Dr. James Hamilton, to whose prolific and beautiful pen we presumptively trace this tribute to Carey, it having first made its appearance in the pages of the *Excelsior*, was another striking illustration of plodding perseverance.

Let us then, my fellow-students, by perseverance conquer every difficulty, until we have developed the inherent dignity of our nature. Rank is only a small appendage to him who, by his own exertions, has raised himself to an intellectual principedom, and who occupies the position of a mental and moral chieftain. His body may die, his tongue and his brain become dust, but the influence of his mind will live on. Identified with Christian truth and progress it will be immortal.

"They never fail who die
In a great cause: the block may soak their gore;
Their heads may sicken in the sun,—their limbs
Be strung to city gates and castle walls—
But still their spirit walks abroad.
Though years
Elapse, and others share as dark a doom,
They but augment the deep and sweeping thoughts
Which overpower all others, and conduct
The world at last to freedom."

5. But, finally, let not the student in his pursuit of

mental excellence and enlargement, under estimate the power of *earnest and systematic Prayer*. Prayer in this, as in every other department of human life and duty, is a factor of illimitable possibility. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." Daniel, whom the Babylonish monarch found "ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm," was pre-eminently a man of prayer. Daniel applied himself to wisdom, and God helped him in its attainment. John Hessel, whose *Memorials* I very cordially recommend to those young men who have not read them, made the following entry in his diary in his twenty-second year: "Have lost much by not praying more of late. I am certain that by prayer the value of all my studies is much increased," (p. 134.) His biographer adds, "The experience of every devout student confirms this statement. Many testimonies might be given illustrative of the truth of Luther's well-known aphorism, *bene precasse bene studuisse*. Doddridge frequently remarked, 'That he never advanced well in human learning without prayer, and that he always made the most proficiency in his studies when he prayed with the greatest fervency.' Dr. Payson says: 'Since I began to beg God's blessing on my studies, I have done more in one week than in a whole year before.' 'The influence of habitual prayer upon his studies,' says his biographer, 'was so certain and so operative, that the strength of his devotion seems,

for the most part, to have been the measure of his progress. By his very near approach to the 'Father of Lights' his mind received, as it were, the direct beams of the eternal fountain of illumination. In the light of these beams the truths of religion were distinctly seen and their relations readily traced. These irradiations from the throne of God not only contributed to the clearness of his perceptions, but imparted a kind of seraphic energy and quickness to his mental operations. From them he derived not light only, but heat.'"

If, then, we would "buy the truth and sell it not," if we would have the true Urim and Thummim mystically to play amid the "precious stones" of the intellect and the heart, ever responsive to the voice of sincere inquiry, let prayer, simple, childlike and believing, ever be the habit and atmosphere of the soul.

LECTURE II.

PREACHER.

LECTURE II.—PREACHER.

AUG. 30th, 1794, Joseph Benson made the following entry in his journal: "Last night, at Newcastle, I had a very remarkable dream. I imagined myself to be conveyed to the brink of a very rapid river, deep and wide, down which multitudes of men and women were floating, all apparently dead, and making not the least resistance against the stream. I was exceedingly struck and concerned at the sight. Upon going a little nearer and observing them more attentively, I perceived, I thought, symptoms of life in some of them. They lifted up their eyes and looked at me, as if desirous I should lend them help. This encouraged me to draw a little nearer; and I thought I began to preach to them, and cry aloud, 'Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.' While I was addressing them in this language, I observed, first one, and then another, raise themselves up in the water, and make toward land. And as I continued addressing them, I thought more and more, scores and hundreds, nay thousands, escaped to the land. When I awoke, and

reflected upon my dream, I found encouragement. I thought, this river is Time, mankind are floating down the stream of it like a lifeless corpse. God has commissioned me to preach to them, and He will crown my labours with success." (p. 153)

Before that conference year, in which the dream occurred, had closed, the night vision of that mighty preacher had received its fulfilment. Visiting Cornwall, "in the course of a single month, Mr. Benson travelled about 400 miles, chiefly in a gig, preached forty sermons, and, on a moderate computation, to at least sixty thousand people. And," his biographer says, "his preaching bore no resemblance to the things of which the poet speaks,

‘That mount the rostrum with a skip,
And then skip down again ;
Pronounce a text ; cry—hem ;
And reading what they never wrote,
Just fifteen minutes, huddle up their work,
And with a well bred whisper close the scene.’

"His sermons were more than ordinarily long; seldom short of an hour; and sometimes he was so thoroughly absorbed in his subject, as to forget himself, and the entire exhaustion of his physical powers rendered an almost abrupt conclusion necessary." (p. 168). Thousands during that amazing month of power fell before the sickle of the reaper; or, to use the similé of the dream, were drawn from the deathly river to the bank of deliverance and safety. A wealthy, but uncultured and unspiritual

Yorkshireman, who was greatly drawn to Benson's ministry, said, on one occasion, "I think nowt of the world when I hear Benson preach." The celebrated Richard Cecil, who embraced every opportunity of hearing him, remarked to a friend, "Mr. Benson seems like a messenger sent from the other world, to call men to account." The application of some of his sermons was terrific. Scores have been awakened under one of these appeals, and shrieks have been uttered as if the day of doom had come. His sermons on the "Fall of Peter" and "Thou art weighed in the balance," &c., are specially memorable. The Rev. Hartwell Horne, author of the "Introduction to the Scriptures" was one of the fruits of his Baptist-like ministry.

Methodism, both in its earlier and later history, has been conspicuous for its pulpit power. Its preachers have neither been *attitudinizers* nor *platitudinizers*; eschewing ritualism on the one hand and rationalism on the other. By their sanctified common sense, mental vigour, and fervent devotion, they have moved the people and moulded the homiletic thought and style of the age. Benson, Bradburn, Bramwell; subsequently, Watson, Clarke, Newton, Bunting, Beaumont, Dawson, Lessey, G. B. Macdonald, Lomas, Dixon, Rattenbury, Punshon, and a galaxy of others on "both sides of the sea," whom time would fail me to mention, as God's ambassadors, have done the work of an Evangelist, and made full "proof" of their "ministry." With some of these "messengers of the

churches" I have been personally acquainted, and can never forget the spell and unction of their sermons. Dawson had a wonderfully dramatic power, of which his printed sermons give no adequate conception. Newton, with his majestic voice,—a voice, which for compass and sweetness I have never heard equalled nor approximated,—a positive luxury to listen to it,—imposing presence and evangelistic oratory. Beaumont, the cultured, the impetuous, the irresistible, the fervid : half-a-dozen handkerchiefs in succession having been known to be wet with perspiration and discarded in the course of a single sermon. Lomas, the sweet, the pellucid, the silvery,—short in person, but as graceful in thought and style as the play of a fountain amid greensward and flowers. Dixon, Miltonic both in eye and thought; in his prime, massive, elaborate; in his later ministry, simple, direct, practical. I had the pleasure of listening to him at the Bradford Conference of 1853, and in the course of a discursive but memorable sermon, he said, "I don't preach now; I only talk." Rattenbury, the persuasive, voice trembling with emotion, the whole man an embodiment of impassioned yearning. These names are but representatives of a host, whose pulpit and personal influence will live as long as the enduring sun.

We may legitimately gather inspiration from this "cloud of witnesses." We are one with them in work and aim. And who has not felt his motive power intensified as he has drawn around him the prophetic mantle of some ascended Elijah? The hero feels the

impulse when he perceives the possibility of his name filling the same space in the public eye which has been occupied by others, whose biography is chronicled in his country's annals. The poet feels it, when he finds himself associated with those whose thoughts throb with immortality, and whose nervous fingers have swept the heart-strings of a nation. And ought not the preacher to feel the swelling enthusiasm, kindled by association with great names and sainted memories? Permit me, then, to indicate, for our mutual guidance, a few points in the *requirements of a sermon* and the *manner of its delivery*.

The vocation of the preacher is not exclusively a human and a prudential one. It bears a higher seal and carries with it a grander authorisation. "Go ye into all the world and *preach* the Gospel to every creature." "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things?" "But rise and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee." We are apt to measure the importance of the work by the surroundings of the preacher. The surroundings are mere accidents—they no more affect the inherent dignity of the

work than the shape of the ingot does the gold. Christ's "minister and witness" is just as illustrious when preaching in a lumbermen's shanty as in the drawing-room of a mansion—in the bush, as in the city. The Rev. Samuel Romilly Hall, at the close of his manly and devoted life, said to the Rev. Alex. Macaulay, "I would give all I have in the world to be an active Methodist preacher on the poorest country circuit."

1. I conceive that the first requirement of a sermon is, that it shall be *indigenous*, i.e., native to the man. The habit of using ready-made outlines is very much to be deprecated. The preacher who is dependent upon them is either mentally indolent, or has misjudged his calling. At a very critical period of my own experience as a preacher—while yet in my *teens*—I was prevailed upon by a senior brother to purchase from him eight volumes of *skeletons*, with the strong recommendation to make a free use of them. This, I am thankful to say, I did not do; and the first opportunity that presented itself of parting with them, was embraced. The late Dr. Dixon, in a free conversation on sermonizing, said to a ministerial friend of mine, "A sermon should be a tree growing out of a man's soul." Admirable definition! Not a tree which has grown out of the individuality of another man, transplanted into my own. My neighbour's mental product might not fit me, nor would it take kindly to the soil. It is his tree, not mine. And the most artistic and scientific manipulation cannot make it mine. God, in the infinity of His wisdom, has made every man an

individual. Wonderful as is the fact, it is no less apparent, that no two men, in their constitutional formation, are exactly alike. There is some point of essential dissimilarity. These points are not intended to be merged, but maintained in their native integrity and force. But when a man slavishly appropriates the sermonic constructions of another, he dwarfs his own individuality, and perpetrates an act of disloyalty to his own mental manhood. Further, by appropriating the work of another, he stultifies himself, and hinders his own intellectual development. The muscle of the mind, like that of the arm, is toughened by use. Further still, the habitual use of ready-made outlines robs of enjoyment. The construction of a sermon, in a very important sense, is a legitimate work of art; and where is the true artist who does not wish, in sketching a landscape, to select his own point of observation? Where is the sculptor who does not wish to outline his own ideal, and who does not experience the most intense pleasure in giving shape and embodiment to it? There may be emergencies, on a week evening, for instance, or when a succession of special services scarcely leaves time for prolonged thought, when the suggestions of another may be partially utilized, but the sermons of the Sabbath ought to be the honest outcome of the man.

The custom of buying written sermons, and then reading them as bought, is vastly more reprehensible than that of simply clothing the outlines of another. Upon this, however, I need not dwell, as it does not

come within the sphere of our denominational shortcomings. When the late Rev. Wm. Huddlestone was stationed in a certain town in the north of England, he had for a neighbour, a minister of another Church, who, unfortunately, bore the same name. The letters intended for the one not unfrequently found their way to the other. Mr. Huddlestone No. 2, becoming annoyed, sent over one of the Methodist Huddlestone's letters, and with it a somewhat tart note, "If you had not aspired to an office that did not belong to you, this would not have happened." A kind and retributive Providence, however, threw in the way of the Methodist Huddlestone the opportunity of something more than a *quid pro quo*,—a package of manuscript sermons, from London, found its way to his study table. Here was a chance which he did not fail to improve. Forwarding the sermons to Huddlestone No. 2, he wrote the short but incisive note, "If *you* had not aspired to an office that did not belong to you, *this* would not have happened." The steel of that weapon went under the fifth rib.

In the treatment of a text, my first question is, How does this passage appear to me? What, in my judgment, is its leading thought? Having secured this—which, by the way, sometimes needs hard and close thinking—I proceed to group and subordinate around it what may be regarded as secondary and tributary. Then, having made my sketch subjectively,—having, so to speak, *individualized* it, I get all the objective light that I can,—not with a view to its

appropriation unchanged—thus making my sermon into a piece of Mosaic work—a conglomeration of extracts, but to enrich and stimulate my own thought by the thoughts of others. I do not resort to Homiletic Cyclopædias. I have no faith in them. I have what I call a Waste Book, in which I enter thoughts, facts, summaries of books read, and references of every kind casually met with. This store-house, gathered for pulpit use,—not by another, whose standpoint is not mine, but by myself,—I glance over, and consult what it may indicate as germane to my subject. When I have gone through these references, and enriched my thought, if needful, by other readings, I am prepared to write upon the subject, either briefly or at full length, as the case may be. My Waste Book is a great treasure to me. Properly speaking, it is a synopsis of what I have seen, heard, or read, for a greater length of time than I care to say, of what might possibly be of use to me as a preacher. Butler's *Analogy* occupies about three inches, and all that I conceived that I might need in it as a work of reference, is grouped under seven headings; and so of other works read.

As to the shape the sermon may assume, that will depend upon the character of the text, and the leaning of the sermonizer. It may be expository, or textual, or topical. No matter which, if it is natural, orderly, and strong. During the eight weeks probation of the Rev. Alex. Fletcher, at Mile-end Chapel, London, he gave an expository course of lectures on Thessalonians

on the morning of each Sabbath. Mr. Fletcher, being a very young man at the time, and unknown to metropolitan fame, preached four Sabbath days without any visible increase in the number of those who attended. The precentor of the chapel, an old, shrewd man, from Berwick-upon-Tweed, imagining that Mr. F. was wearying the people by constantly expounding one part of the New Testament, and yet afraid to offend the rev. gentleman by saying so in so many terms, whispered to him one day, in his own "canny" way, "Ots, Mr. Fletcher, do you mean *always* to lecture on Thessalonians?" Mr. Fletcher intimated that he intended to continue his lectures on the same portion of Scripture for a few weeks longer. The other shrugged his shoulders, and looked as if he meant to say, "Well, if you do, you'll never be the minister of this chapel; that's clear." By this time, however, Mr. F.'s talents as a preacher began to be discovered by the more intelligent of the congregation, and they were not slow in expressing their admiration of him to their respective acquaintances. The result was, that in a Sabbath or two more, a number of strangers came; and they were for the most part so struck with the power of the preacher, that in their turn they brought others to hear him. And before Mr. F.'s probationary term had expired, many in the east end of London, accustomed to church-going, had heard of his ability, and the chapel became crowded to excess. The old precentor, seeing the growing popularity of the preacher, went up to Mr. Fletcher one day in the vestry, and said, with a significant look and tone, "Ots,

Mr. Fletcher, I think we must *prent* the lectures on the Thessalonians.* Perhaps, if Mr. Fletcher had adopted the textual or the topical method instead of the expository, the result might have been the same, and the admiration of the old precentor equally as "canny." The method was not the secret,—it was the man behind.

2. Stipulating, then, in the first place, that the sermon shall be native to the man, I would name, as the second requirement, that it shall be *Evangelical*,—and what I mean by this is, that it shall be as full of Christ as the nature of the topic will admit. The great, underlying, essential need of the world is Christ. A tribe that Livingstone met with in Africa, and to whom he preached Christ and peace, said, wearily and yearningly, "O that is what we want; we are tired—we want rest and peace." When the African said that, he represented humanity. Man everywhere, whatever his complexion or social position, needs rest of soul. Christ only can give that; and the more clearly,convincingly,and attractively the preacher puts Christ before the world, the more thoroughly does he serve "his generation by the will of God." The Poet Laureate uttered substantially the cry of the African, when he wrote—

" I falter where I firmly trod,
And falling with my weight of cares
Upon the world's great altar stairs
That slope through darkness up to God ;
I stretch lame hands of faith, and grope,
And gather dust and chaff, and call
To what I feel is Lord of all."

* Metropolitan Pulpit, II., p. 136.

"We want rest and peace," said the one. "I stretch lame hands of faith, and grope, and gather dust and chaff," said the other. In their need of Christ, and in their deep yearning for that which Christ only can give, the aboriginal savage and the cultured Poet Laureate stand on the same platform.

Ritualism cannot meet this want. A certain preacher, in a dedicatory service, enlarging upon the "beauty of holiness," said that one element of this beauty was a due, regular, and apostolic ordination. Another, was, ecclesiastical architecture; and then he proceeded to enlarge upon the Gothic curve, the "storied window," the "dim religious light," the "pealing organ," the "service high and anthems clear," and all that is deemed necessary to charm the sense and elevate the soul. The millinery of the altar-table and the surplice, and the mummery of bowing and intoning may be lifted into channels of grace, and regarded as indispensably necessary to purity and spirituality of worship; but the chaff feeds not the flock—the remedy touches not the disease. The *London Times*, of November 3rd, 1882, in a leader on Mr. Green and the Ritualists, is very caustic, but not too severe. The writer asks:—"Among men of sense and of education what adherents can they claim, and what converts do they seem likely to make? What message have they that the present age can receive from them? They know the histrionics of their profession, but they know scarcely anything else. Their opinion has no weight in any matter which learned and well-instructed men

desire to see elucidated. No one would think of putting any one of them in a position in which knowledge and scholarship would be required. They have gained success and adherents by their æsthetic practices. They have coloured and adorned the public worship of the Church, and have thus made it attractive in the eyes of some people, and offensive in the eyes of others. This is the measure of what they have done, and of what they appear capable of doing. We give them the credit they have deserved. That they have a following is unquestionable, but it is among women rather than men, or, if among men at all, not among those most remarkable for the higher qualities of their sex. It is to the weak and foolish that their teaching most properly addresses itself. *Similia similibus curantur*. If a man with a half-sized brain or a spinal complaint, or some morbid tendency or other of mind or body, is to be brought under spiritual influences, the Ritualists are fit to deal with him, and will, not improbably, do him as much good as he is capable of receiving. The stronger specimens they cannot touch, and they make no attempt to touch them. Their prudence is commendable. They know well that their nets are for small fry, and they have no wish that they should be torn to pieces by being put to an improper use." So far the *Times*. No form of pulpit ritualism touches the deep need of the soul, the secular press itself being judge.

Neither can *Rationalism* meet this want. Who has not felt, in reading the sermons of the late Dean of

Westminster, amiable and attractive as his personal character was, how cold is the presentation which he makes of the atonement of Christ! In the diary of Henry Crabb Robinson we have the following entry respecting the views of F. W. Robertson, of Brighton: "As he interprets the words, *without blood there is no remission of sins*, they become inoffensive, for it means no more than this: Christ died to exhibit the perfectest Christian truth—that the essence of Christianity is self-sacrifice." Is it too much to say that the representatives of this school change Jesus into the "gardener," and take away from the yearning disciple the sight of the Crucified and Risen One?"

I may venture farther and say, that that preaching which is popularly known as being apologetically "abreast of the times," does not meet this want. What cares one in a hundred of our congregations what Matthew Arnold, or Herbert Spencer, or any of that ilk, may think or say? Most of them are sinners who need a Saviour, and that sermon that is most full of Jesus in the roundedness of His character and work, is what meets the hunger, or begets it where it is not.

Chalmers had no conversions until he got the Cross into his heart and put it into his preaching. "The excellency of a sermon," says Flavel, "lies in the plainest discoveries and liveliest application of Jesus Christ." In a cathedral on the continent, the light is artificially made to converge to a crucifix, from whence it is reflected in a flood of glory upon the worshipper.

Beautiful symbol of the "ministration of righteousness!" Dr. Alexander, in one of his letters, says, "A mixture of Baxter and Flavel would be my highest wish as a preacher. O! if we could live one real year of effective Gospel service, we might be willing to depart. Preaching Christ is the *best, hardest, sweetest work on this side of beholding Him.*" Chunder Sen, the Reformer of India, who seems to be coming to the light, said, not long ago, "Who is to be the future ruler of India? Not Her Majesty's Viceroy; not the Council of Calcutta. It seems to me that Jesus of Nazareth is to be our Governor hereafter." Paul struck the centre of the target when he exclaimed, "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness, but unto them," who have tried it, "Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."

3. But again, the preacher must be not only himself in the construction of his sermon, and evangelical in the matter of it, but *judiciously comprehensive* in the presentation of doctrine. Dr. Gervase Smith, referring, in Exeter Hall, to his Didsbury days, said that a fellow-student found his way one Sabbath afternoon to a place of worship, and the text of the sermon was announced,—“The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.” The preacher said, “The text divides itself naturally into three parts: 1. The harvest is past; 2. The summer is ended; and, 3. We are not saved.” Then, having spoken for eight or ten minutes upon the first and second subjects, and

told his rustic congregation what beautiful weather they had had, and what a harvest had filled all the granaries, he came to the third part of the subject. He began, "The third subject, dear friends"—then he paused, and presently added, "The third is so *disagreeable* a subject that I will leave it to-day and take it up another time." "What shall I preach about?" said a minister to the pastor of a coloured flock which he was about to address. "Well, mos' any subject will be 'ceptable," was the reply; "only I would like to gib you one word of caution." "Ah! what is that?" "Well, ef I was you, I'd tech werry light on de ten commandments." "Indeed! and why?" "Oh! cos I hab notise' dat dey mos' always hab a dampning effect on de congregation." These illustrations may be somewhat farcical, but they touch the point in question. The truth may be preached, but not the whole truth. Christ may be preached, but not a full Christ. Christ as an Example, Christ as a Saviour, Christ as a Sympathiser; but not Christ as a King, a Lawgiver, and a Judge. What is felt to be agreeable, and what is known to be acceptable, may have an undue preference. The law and its terrors may not be absolutely ignored, but the position which they occupy may become so nebulous by infrequency and generalization as to be shorn of their legitimate force. An intelligent farmer, who occasionally sat under a preacher of this class, describing him to a neighbour, aptly said, "He may be a good man enough, but he always harrows with the teeth up-

wards." The farmer knew very well that that form of harrowing might be smooth to the field, but that it would be disastrous to the crop. Soil culture and soul culture have features in common. In both cases there are times when the teeth of the harrow must go down, not up,—down, not with a savage kind of satisfaction, as though the preacher were delighted in having the opportunity of doing it; but with Christ-like tenderness, as a duty done for Him. That pulpit that is lacking in fidelity to the sterner aspects of Christ's teaching and work, can never be a robust and powerful one. The Ten Commandments were placed in the Ark, beneath the Mercy Seat, inside the Holy of Holies. The association was strikingly symbolic. Not over the Mercy Seat, but under it. Forming part of the inventory of redemption. Christ came, not to abolish, but to fulfil. The most successful preachers have been the most tenderly faithful ones. Jonah's sermon had the teeth downwards when he addressed the Ninevites. Bishop Latimer, 350 years ago, commenting on the words of Jonah, says, "In this sermon of Jonah there was no great curiousness, no great clerkliness, no great affectation of words; but it was a nipping sermon, a pinching sermon, a rough sermon, and a sharp biting sermon," but it was a successful sermon. John the Baptist had the teeth downward, when he addressed Herod; Christ, when He rebuked the Pharisees; Peter, when the thousands of Pentecost fell before him; Stephen, when he stood before the Council; Paul, when he reasoned with Felix;

Whitefield, when the head-dresses of the nobility shook with excitement and terror; Dawson, when graphically portraying the *Pale Horse and his Rider*. A member of one of my classes was converted under that sermon. Speaking of it, he said, "I was so terror-stricken and carried away, that I looked round, thinking that the Rider and the Horse were just upon me."

The doctrine of future punishment in its hopelessness, is a theme which the preacher has no authority either to intermit or modify. So long, as Christ and the Bible are the legitimate standards of guidance, and Christ, as presented by the Bible, the "terror of the Lord," in its proper place, and with becoming tenderness, must be used to "persuade men." If I adopt the principle of the notorious "Essays and Reviews,"—a principle which marks the sceptical thought of to-day, and refer the propriety of endless future punishment to my own consciousness,—if I make the "verifying faculty" within me the standard of what *ought* to be, I introduce an element of interpretation which would make the Bible as a supreme authority of no force. A subjective theology is unreliable. A theology shaped by the feeling and judgment of fallible men, would be contradictory and untrustworthy. Let the verifying faculty say what it may, I find that Christ preached this doctrine, and I find nothing in the Bible to justify the hope that probation exists after the death of the body. This being the case, necessity is laid upon me to do as Christ did, and preach what the Bible says *will* be.

The Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, writing on Universalism, says, "It gives the sort of pleasure which we may conceive to attend the removal of a strongly constructed bit from the mouth of a restive horse. But it propounds a belief; and an affirmative proposition must have for its foundation something more solid than a mere sense of relief."

4. Again, a sermon ought to be *Perspicuous and Experimental*. Hearers of every mental grade love clearness and the heart instinctively opens itself to the men who can say—

"What we have felt and seen,
With confidence we tell."

The *beau idéal* of eloquence, in a few cases, may be "words of learned length and thundering sound,"—a very cloud-land of indefinableness,—descriptions, Turner-like, bathed in golden mist; but the "common people," and those not common, appreciate the man who has something to say, and can say it compactly and clearly. A good old Scotchwoman required, as the condition of her admiration, that a sermon should contain something which transcended her comprehension. "Eh! its a' verra weel," said she, on hearing one which did not fulfil this reasonable condition; "but d'ye ca' that fine preaching? There was na ae word that I could na explain mysel'." Another old lady—possibly English, for the class, though comparatively small, is not nationally limited—after having heard the sermon of some favourite

divine, was asked if she understood him. "Understand him!" said she, "do you think I would presume,—blessed man?"

Notwithstanding, however, this cloud-land yearning on the part of some, the many wish to follow the preacher from beginning to end. Children are listening to him, who cease to be interested the moment he becomes unintelligible. Men and women are listening to him, whose eyes droop or wander the moment the thread drops from their fingers. It is very possible to over-estimate the mental range of an audience. Some there may be who are familiar with all "the subtle, nice affinities of matter;—its virtues, motions, laws, and may deeply talk of mental, moral, natural and divine;" but the many know little of "philosophy, science, necessity, or laws of gravitation." The "old, old story, of Jesus and His love," interests them, especially if told "simply" and freshly, brimming from a heart that feels.

I know that some preachers find it immensely difficult to be simple. It is not in the grain. A learned professor was once engaged to address a Sunday-school. He read a number of verses from the Bible, and then said, "Children, I intend to give you a summary of the truth taught in this portion of Scripture." Here the pastor touched him, and suggested that he had better explain to the school what "summary" meant. He then turned round and said to the children, "Your pastor wants me to explain what 'summary means,' and I will do so. Well,

children, 'summary' is an *abbreviated synopsis* of a thing." Mental structure and drill have largely to do with the clothing of the thought. "Every man after his own order." One star differs from another, and as long as human ones do in "glory," it is right and proper that they should differ. One man can utter a grand thought in a grand way,—another man can express a thought equally as grand in language as simple, as clear, as rounded, and as beautiful as a dew-drop. The great point is the consecration of the gift, in all its diversity, to the teaching and testimony of the pulpit in its most effective form.

Dr. Steel, in his *Love Enthroned*, which, by the way is one of the finest optimistic works which I know, strongly urges experimental preaching. "The great want of the age," he says, "is a witnessing church and ministry. If every Christian pulpit could be for only one Sunday converted from an advocate's stand to a witness-box, and each anointed preacher should say, 'Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul,' what a stir there would be in the unbelieving world!"

Having, then, noticed some of the *characteristics of a sermon*, it may not be deemed out of place if I glance at the *manner of its delivery*. Two thoughts have occurred to me on this point.

1. The delivery ought to be *natural*. Moore, the poet, compared a statesman of his day to the village pump, because he waved his arm up and down, "And

spouts, and spouts and spouts away, in one weak, washy, everlasting flood!" But if the words of this statesman had not been "washy!"—if they had been strong words,—words of weight and point—the monotonous, pump-like waving of the arm might have done much to neutralize them. Unpracticed speakers are in danger of over-doing. They have the impression that their hand *must* wave, and their voice *must* inflect;—that that is the way all great orators do when swaying the multitudes that listen to them; hence the artistic sawing of the air and the explosive intonation, which being something designedly added to, and not unconsciously growing out of them, are as impressive as the action of a paper man, whose arms jerk up and down as the child pulls the strings. Too little action is better than too much. The speaker gains a great point if he can impress his audience with the conviction that he has a reserve of power—that there are resources within him not yet drawn upon.

As to a course of lessons in elocution, I do not attach vital importance to it. The orator is born, not made; and where the gift is not there, the most consummate elocutionist can be of little service. He may help where it is, but common-sense and good taste can do that. Robert Newton was *naturally* eloquent; as perfect at nineteen, I have been told, as he was in the full blaze of his popularity. John Rattenbury was constitutionally suasive; when a local preacher in Manchester he was so. Morley Punshon was apparently as perfect before he took lessons in the art, as after

The difference to myself, so far as I had the opportunity of judging, was not perceptible.

The practice of pulpit reading is little known among us, and very properly so. Chalmers could read with wonderful power; his tremendous energy swept before it like a torrent the disadvantages of the method. John Harris, the author of *Mammon*, read exquisitely. I once rode forty miles in the saddle to listen to Harris, and was abundantly repaid for the journey. His morning text was the "House of prayer for all people," (Isa. 56. 7); the evening one, "Whatsoever things are true," etc., (Phil. 4. 8.) Winter Hamilton and John Ely were in the pulpit with him. Harris's classic profile and musical voice harmonized well with the beauty of his diction, and the faultless rendering of his manuscript. But what would Paul have done with a MS. in relating to Agrippa his conversion, or reasoning with Felix, or addressing the Jerusalem mob, or enlarging upon "Jesus and the Resurrection," to the inquisitive Athenians? Imagine Whitefield or Moody *reading* to the thousands in whose heart and eye was the question, "What must I do to be saved!" On the other hand, the strictly memoriter method is open to very serious objections. One is, the possibility of a mnemonic lapse; another, the mental drudgery which it imposes. No preacher can memorise three sermons a week to the same congregation and retain his health. Lord Brougham, writing to Zachary Macaulay, father of the great historian, recommends, first, that his son should acquire the habit of easy-speaking;

second, in order to convert this easy-speaking into chaste eloquence, he should familiarise himself with Demosthenes, and the best speeches of modern times; and, further still, that he should to the end of life "prepare word for word most of his finer passages." Dr. Storrs, in his admirable work on "Preaching without Notes," suggests the writing of a brief sketch containing catch-words, to be retouched on Saturday night, but not to be taken into the pulpit. Careful preparation, embracing perfect familiarity with the thought, and in some parts with the language, has commended itself to me as the most excellent way. The week evening sermon or prayer meeting, may be prepared for, without writing, an hour or two before service.

2. Again. The delivery of a sermon ought to be *earnest*, as well as natural. When Wesley sent John Barritt to Inverness, in 1788, with Wellingtonian point and emphasis, he said, "When thou preachest opinions and modes of worship, speak with coolness; but when thou preachest repentance, faith, and holiness, then, if thou hast any zeal, show it." The Chinese convert was right, when he remarked to a missionary, "We want men with hot hearts to tell us of the love of Christ." Wm. Arthur, quoting Dr. Dixon, when the Doctor's obituary was read in the British Conference, said that on one occasion he defined eloquence as "truth fused into feeling by a burning heart." The instinct of the Christian Chinaman was true. Earnestness commands. Pulpit history is full

of confirmative illustration. Earnestness, not simulated, but felt,—not a painted fire, but a real one.

Thomas Carlyle, writing on church extension, somewhat gruffly says, “And now, how teach religion? By plying with liturgies, catechisms, credos, droning thirty-nine or other articles incessantly into the infant ear? Friends! in that case why not apply to Birmingham, and have machines made, and set up at all street corners, in highways and byways, to repeat and vociferate the same, not ceasing night or day? The genius of Birmingham is adequate to that. Depend upon it, Birmingham can make machines to repeat liturgies and articles, — to do whatsoever feat is mechanical. And what were all schoolmasters, nay, all priests and churches, compared with this Birmingham iron church! Votes of two millions in aid of the Church were then something. You order, at so many pounds a head, so many thousand iron parsons as your grant covers; and fix them by satisfactory masonry in all quarters wheresoever wanted, to preach there independent of the world. In loud thoroughfares, still more in unawakened districts, troubled with argumentative infidelity, you may make the windpipes wider, strengthen the main cylinder; your parson preaches to the due pitch while you give him coal, and fears no man or thing. Here were a ‘Church Extension’ to which I, with my last penny, did I believe it, would subscribe. . . . To ‘teach’ religion, the first thing needful, and also the last and the only thing, is finding a man who *has* religion. All else follows from this—

church building, church extension—whatever else is needful follows ; without this, nothing will follow.”

Dr. Dixon, the Christian Chinaman, Wesley, all right,—the heart must be in the preaching, and it must be seen. Benson was no cast-iron parson. Listen to one of his appeals made while preaching in Leeds: “The Lord is coming ; the Lord is coming,—He is coming ; He is at the door,—hasten, sinner, into the ante-chamber,—get apparelled, and go forth to meet Him.” He then paused, and in one of his higher tones shouted, as if he beheld the Judge descending: “Lord, stay Thy coming,—stay Thy coming,—he is not ready ; the sinner is not ready.” Every eye was fixed—a breathless silence reigned over the whole congregation—and at that moment, as he was wont under extraordinary influences, he dropped upon his knees, and the congregation simultaneously with him, when, for the space of six or eight minutes, he besieged the throne of grace, in all the agony of solemn, special, importunate, intercessory prayer ; the people sobbing, sighing, and groaning in spirit with him. On rising—with scarcely a dry eye before him, or a pocket-handkerchief unemployed—he again paused, and having apparently received an assurance in prayer that the Lord would spare the half-abandoned one a little longer, he again “urged,” as if pointedly and personally addressing the unhappy one, the duty of immediate preparation. Benson fulfilled Carlyle’s condition,—he *had* religion, and his apostolic earnestness was followed by apostolic fruit.

This allusion to Benson and *earnestness* brings me to one vital feature of a sermon which I have not yet formally named,—it does not come under either of the divisions indicated in this lecture,—either the *matter of a sermon* or the *manner of its delivery*, and yet it is vitally connected with both,—I refer to that subtle, indefinable, ethereal, yet real something, called *Uction*. Without this, the most faultless sermon will utterly fail in the accomplishment of its true mission; but with this, although it may be apparently as unfit as the blowing of the ram's horn before Jericho, or the shepherd's sling in conflict with the mailed Goliath, nevertheless the ramparts of unbelief will crumble in the one case, and the giants of defiant disloyalty fall headlong in the other. Sir Astley Cooper, on visiting Paris, was asked by the surgeon-in-chief of the Empire, how many times he had performed a certain wonderful feat of surgery? He replied that he had performed the operation thirteen times. "Ah! but Monsieur, I have done him one hundred and sixty times. How many times did you save his life?" continued the Frenchman, after he had looked into the blank amazement of Sir Astley's face. "I," said the Englishman, "saved eleven out of thirteen. How many did you save out of one hundred and sixty?" "Ah! Monsieur, I lose dem all; but de operation was very brilliant." The sermon, like the Frenchman's operation, may be very brilliant, but if the *unction* is not there, the malady of the heart will defy the skill of the physician.

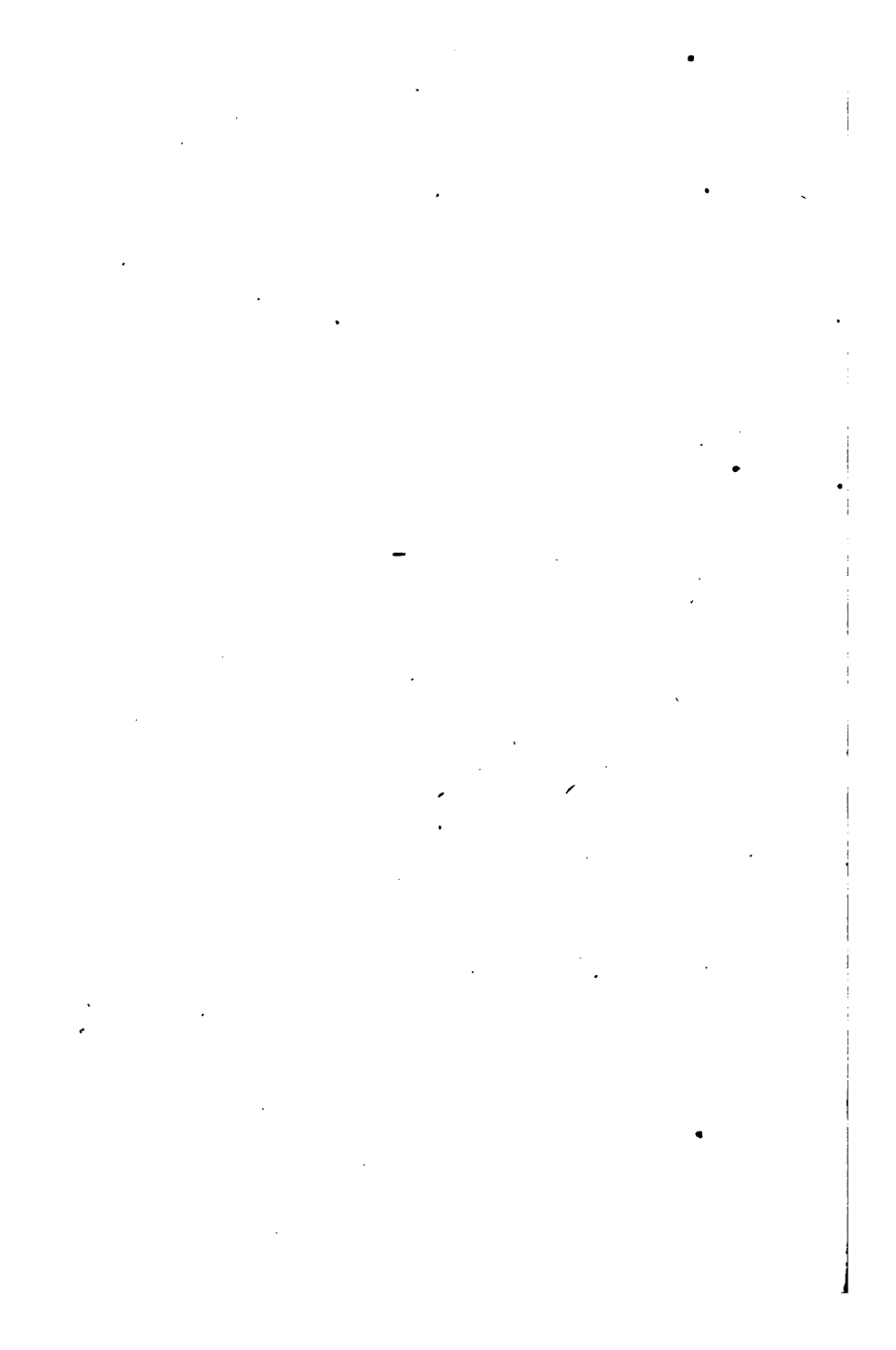
O how desirable is this unction of healing and of

power! How refreshing and joy-giving to the people,—how authenticating and comforting to the preacher! Moses had the unction, when he came into the camp after his forty days sojourn on the mount, with a countenance all ablaze with glory. Peter and his fellow-disciples had the unction, when the “tongues of fire” sat upon them. The “men of Cyprus and Cyrene” had the unction, when, in the streets of queenly Antioch, they spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus,—the hand of persecution had scattered them, but the “hand of the Lord” was with them, and “a great number believed and turned unto the Lord.” John Livingstone had the unction, when five hundred were converted under a single sermon. Joseph Sutcliffe, the devout commentator, had the unction. A mechanic, who sat under his ministry, being asked who preached in a certain place of worship, replied, “A man who lives in heaven all the week, and comes down to preach on Sundays.” A. B. Earle, the simple evangelist, had the unction, when, in a certain revival, Daniel Steele, the cultured preacher and professor, wept, when he retrospected his own comparatively fruitless ministry of twenty years. C. J. Finney had the unction,—one day visiting a factory, and looking earnestly in the face of a scoffing young woman, she fell on her knees beside her loom; the penitential contagion spreading, the works were stopped, and the factory became the spiritual birth-place of the “hands.” James Turner, Methodist local-preacher, Peterhead, Scotland, had

the unction. It is calculated that over eight thousand souls were converted in Aberdeenshire alone, during the last few years of his comparatively brief life. The night before the battle of Arbela, Alexander, walking amongst the tents of his soldiery, heard from one of them mutterings of discontent. "What can our General be thinking of? He has brought a mere handful of men, some 30,000, and a few auxiliary troops, against yonder 600,000 Persians! They are enough to eat us." Alexander lifted the curtain and said, "But how many do you count me for?" Brother! tempted to be discouraged by the magnitude of the work, How much is the *unction* good for? What is the estimate you place upon Holy Ghost power?

"O that it now from heaven might fall,
And all our sins consume!
Come, Holy Ghost, for Thee we call,
Spirit of burning, come."





LECTURE III.

PASTOR.



LECTURE III.—PASTOR.

IN order to facilitate thought, the duties of the pastor may be noticed, first, in their relation to the *Institutions and Work of the Church*; second, to *Children and Young People*; and, third, to *Personal Visitation*.

I. *The Pastorate, in its relation to the Institutions and Work of the Church.*—Whatever may be supposed to help or hurt the life of the Church, may legitimately occupy the thought of the pastor. Methodism, in the providence of God, has been signally honoured. From the spark of living fire divinely implanted in the heart of Wesley, May 24th, 1738, has sprung the spiritual illumination of millions. The entry which Wesley made in his journal, descriptive of this memorable event, must be to the devout mind—a mind open to providential significance—one of the choicest and most inspiring classics in the language. For three weeks he had been seeking pardon of sin. On Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, he says, “I had continual sorrow and heaviness in my heart.” * * On Wednesday evening, “I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther’s

preface to the Epistle of the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ—Christ alone for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away *my* sins, even *mine*, and saved *me* from the law of sin and death. * * I testified openly to all there what I now first felt in my heart."*

Wesley, at this time, was nearly 35 years of age; an ordained minister of the Church of England, having been two years a missionary of that Church in this western hemisphere, and having, according to his own confession, for twenty-five previous years sought peace in religious exercises, and found it not. We regard Wesley's conversion as the *germ cell* of Methodism. Out of this, by the blessing of God, has grown that colossal form of the Christian Church with which we have the honour to be identified: a Church which has directly and indirectly revived and stimulated sister Churches to an extent that will not be known until the day of eternity; a Church which has instrumentally conducted, during the one hundred and forty years of her existence, millions of man's fallen family from sin to Christ, and from earth to heaven, and which is, at the present moment, vigorously and successfully engaged in the same mission of mercy in each of the five great divisions of the globe.

But while fervently attached to Methodism, as the

* Works I., 63; Jackson, 64.

Church of my youth and manhood, the Church to which I am instrumentally indebted for the good that is in me, and with which I have been lineally connected, on both sides, from the second decade of her history; while fervently attached to Methodism, as one of the purest and most successful forms of Protestant and primitive Christianity, visible to the world in this nineteenth century, and to do the work and promote the interests of which has been for years my "meat,"—I do not say that she has reached finality in her arrangements, and that, as an Evangelistic force, she is not susceptible of still further development. From the earliest period of her existence has the shaping hand of Providence been adapting her to the needs of the day, and while raising the memorial stone in grateful acknowledgment of Divine help, her trustful language is,—whatever the possibilities and demands of the future, "Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel." "Happy is that people whose God is the Lord."

The *Class or Fellowship Meeting* has been providentially interwoven with the history of Methodism from the beginning. The sagacious mind of Wesley perceived the utility of a judicious and godly leader having the spiritual oversight of a limited number of members. The principle was adopted, and subsequent facts have shewn its wisdom. The proper working of this claims the best thought of the pastor. The class-meeting cannot be dispensed with, either as an expression of spiritual life, or a base of Christian evangelism. In the development and consolidation

of Methodism it has played a conspicuous part. The blessing which James Turner, the Scottish Evangelist, got in connection with *it*, and the service which went before, led him to identify himself with the Methodist Church. And when he subsequently became a leader, the Holy Ghost strikingly worked with him through that instrumentality. He began with three members; in three months the three had become fifteen; six months later the fifteen had become thirty, and within three years the class had to be divided. And what James Turner did, thousands have done. Nor need we wonder: in the hands of such leaders the secret of enlargement is not difficult of solution.

There are, however, class leaders *and* class leaders, class-meetings *and* class-meetings; and this diverse character of the officers and the institution robs the class of much of its value, and stands in the way of its being satisfactorily, what it was originally intended to be—a test of membership. Unsuitable leaders and formalised classes repel. A class-room without life, without progress, cold, burdensome, funereal—utterances in some cases scarcely audible—is not the place to make either converts or Christians. It needs more naturalness, less routine; more ease, less stiffness; more variety of phrase and method, less of the stereotype. For the last twelve years I have uniformly discouraged the ordinary method of meeting a class, such as expecting each person to stand up and give a statement of experience. Some are timid, some are constitutionally reserved, some are not apt in

formulating what they have "felt and seen." They are in danger of saying what *ought* to be, instead of what *is*. My conviction is, that the customary requirement is not a wholesome one. Bible truth, in its most practical and experimental form, discussed with cheerful and reverent freedom, benefits and draws every order of enquiring mind. The class-room needs to be full of spiritual sunshine, in which spontaneity is the rule:—Leader and member freely participating in both question and answer. The class a *privilege*, not a *tax*. The eye instinctively turned toward it,—not away from it. The law enjoining Christian fellowship will then be where it ought to be—in the soul of the member. If not there, *no statute can make it living*. Over 2,000 years ago, Solon said, "The strength of law is in the public disposition to cherish and revere it; and nothing is more calculated to make permanent the general spirit of a constitution, than to render its details flexible and open to reform." He further says, "We may bind men not to change laws, but we cannot bind the spirit and the opinion from which laws alone derive cogency or value."*

If the class-room is made radiant with Christian sociality, no statute enjoining fellowship will perplex the administrator. The good of his day, like the good of a day long ago, will voluntarily "speak often one to another." In a certain Canadian town, twelve or fourteen young ladies met every Monday afternoon,

* Bulwer's Athens, I. 359, 366.

at three o'clock, for an hour's reading of the Scriptures, conversation, and prayer. One of the members told me, that sometimes they became so deeply interested, that the weekly session was prolonged until near five o'clock. These young ladies were members of churches other than Methodist.

Systematic visitation of the classes by the pastor, as far as practicable, cannot be healthily omitted. Small classes are better than large ones, where a sufficient number of suitable leaders can be had. And if not sufficient, why not have a supply in training, to be utilised as necessity may require?

Another important department of Church work, for which the pastor will suitably care, is the *prayer-meeting service*—what the Salvation Army significantly calls “knee drill.” The most sanctified judgment will find sufficient scope in directing and stimulating the devotions of a church. The weekly prayer-meeting, the Sabbath evening prayer-meeting, and the cottage prayer-meeting, will not be omitted. Men and women, mighty in prayer, whatever their social position, are elements of power for which the Church, and the world can never be too grateful. What benedictions hourly fall upon the ministry, the Church, and the community, where these people live! Their prayers, like rivulets rising in solitary places, swell the stream which turns the wheels of progress in every department of Church activity and life. Thank God, Methodism is rich in these elements of power: it will be a sad day if ever she becomes poor in them.

Let the weekly prayer-meeting be fresh, brief in prayer, with testimony occasionally given. The Sabbath evening prayer-meeting, not lengthy, except the sorrowful are seeking the Saviour, and upon this target the eye must be steadily fixed ; the cottage prayer-meeting, selected with judgment and well manned.

At the beginning of last year (1882), I was led to select two cottages for a Monday evening prayer-meeting. I had just held a month of special services, and the inmates of these cottages had received good. My simple object was to give stability to the results by continuing the meetings for two or three weeks in this form. The prayer leaders whom I deemed most proper to conduct the meetings, I announced from the pulpit. The beneficial influence being manifest, I added to the number of places and workers ; and what was commenced as a temporary expedient, has continued with unabated interest throughout the year. My custom has been to announce, every Sunday morning, five or six cottage meetings, with the names of not less than five prayer leaders for each meeting, varying the places and the men each week ; and no one knowing where his appointment was to be until the announcement was made. Having upwards of forty names eligible for this class of service, all have not been nominated every week. Some may be disposed to say, " rather autocratic ;" but I can assure those who may think so, that it is a form of autocracy that has, so far, worked well. At the Wednesday evening

prayer-meeting in the church, reports of these cottage prayer-meetings are asked for, and the short verbal statements given are sometimes very interesting.

General Booth, in the course of an effective speech made in the British Conference, (1881) said, "As soon as a man gets saved we set him up to say so." One of our lasses was holding a meeting: 'What does an ignorant girl like you know about religion?' said one; 'I can say the Lord's Prayer in Latin.' She replied, 'I can say more than that; I can say 'the Lord has saved my soul' in English.'" Judicious, experimental men are very valuable in cottage prayer-meetings.

Let me name here, somewhat summarily, other departments of service which the pastor will promote and supervise, such as Church Lyceums, Mental Improvement Societies, Congregational Libraries, Temperance Associations, Lay Agency in various forms, and Special Services for a revival of religion. A Lyceum, well conducted, is a great attraction and incentive to young people; a congregational library, embracing some of the best works in literature, science, and religion, will counteract, to some extent, the taste for fictitious reading, now so general; the blue ribbon movement is one of the grandest philanthropies of the day, and has urgent claims on the practical co-operation of Christian people; special services, whether conducted by the pastor himself or an accredited evangelist, have been from the beginning an important factor in the history of the "people called Methodists."

The Rev. Richard Reece once said, in his solemn and monosyllabic way, to the late Dr. Waddy, then a young man, who complained that he could not find time for his work, "Mr. Waddy, you-should-get-up-early-in-a-morning. It-would-greatly-length-en-your-days." "Yes," replied the junior, whose humour was always ready, "but it would greatly shorten my nights."

The work which I have just sketched may seem heavy, but without lengthening the ordinary day, or shortening the ordinary night, the pastor, by a judicious economy of time, will not find either the work named, or what I may yet name, oppressive.

I proposed at the outset to notice, in the second place, "The Pastor in his Relation to Children and Young People." Before, however, passing on to this topic, I will emphasize another aspect of Church institution and work—I refer now to the *Leaders' Meeting*. I have the impression that this old Methodist arrangement does not receive among us the attention which it merits. Having been familiar with it from my youth, I can testify to its necessity and worth.

The Discipline states that the Leaders' Meeting shall be composed of the ministers and probationers for the ministry appointed to the Circuit, the stewards, and the leaders. Its business shall be to inquire: 1. Are there any sick? 2. Are there any requiring temporal relief? 3. Are there any that walk disorderly and will not be reprov'd? 4. Are there any who wilfully neglect the means of grace? 5. Are there any changes to be made in the classes? 6. Are there any members

on trial to be received into full membership? 7. What amount has been received for the support of the minister? 8. Is there any miscellaneous business? It will be seen from these questions that the function of the Leaders' Meeting is an important one. In the Parent Body, a large sum comes through this channel in aid of ministerial stipend. Not much, however, in Canada,—our system of finance being placed on a different basis. Apart from this, the Leaders' Meeting touches great issues.

When Wesley, in 1742, instituted the Leaders' Meeting, he was simply, perhaps unconsciously, reviving one of the usages of early Christianity. In the primitive Church there were "officers specially appointed 'to examine closely into the lives and characters of applicants' for admission, and of those who were already recognised." This court, the Bampton Lecturer for 1880 calls, a "College of Disciplinary Officers."

By vitalizing this resuscitated usage, what should we gain? 1. *The value of Church membership would be enhanced, and greater Christian stability secured*, were the case of every applicant for admission submitted to the "College of Disciplinary Officers." The door would thus be guarded, and prestige thrown around its entrance. A cheap and facile membership is in danger of being loosely held. A significant record exists in a church in Boston, touching an applicant for membership. The following is an extract:—"March 12th, 1856. Thinks he has made some progress since he was here before, at least in knowledge. Has main-

tained his habits of prayer and reading the Bible. Is fully determined to adhere to the cause of Christ always. Feels that it would be very bad if he should join the church and then turn. Will never give up his hope or love it less, whether admitted to the church or not. Admitted, May 4th, 1856." The candidate was a youth of eighteen years. He has never "turned," and during the last few months has been the means of bringing hundreds of the under-graduates of Oxford and Cambridge to Jesus,—I refer to D. L. Moody.

2. Another gain would be, *thoroughness of church oversight*. It was this feature which, in the first instance, commended itself to the discernment of Wesley. Spurgeon's large membership of over 4,000 is placed under the supervision of a Board of Deacons, of which the Pastor is President. The residence, circumstances, spiritual growth or otherwise, date of membership, attendance at communion, etc., are known. What could the pastor do with such a constituency without an efficient Board of counsel and supervision? Methodism needs this oversight, faithful, yet tempered by that discretionary power which prudent usage has sanctioned.

3. Another gain would be, *development of evangelical power*. The deacons of the primitive Church were the Bishops' "eyes." The Pastor representatively multiplies his influence in each working member of the meeting. By training his staff to work, he augments the power of the pulpit, limited only by the number and weight of the agents engaged.

4. Another gain would be, *spiritual life and enjoyment*. A stagnant church cannot be healthy. Work for Christ strangely quickens the pulse, brightens the eye, and gives comfort and force to prayer.

And why may not every station and appointment have its Leaders' Meeting, or something tantamount to it? If the number of Leaders and Stewards is small—too small to form an efficient corps for counsel and action—why not select an adequate number from the more active men and women of the locality, and meet them monthly for consultation and service? Give them work to do in the interim, and let the Secretary of the meeting keep a record of the work done.

II. I come now to the *Relation in which the Pastor stands to Childhood and Youth*. A minister once asked a sexton why he bestowed more pains on the smaller graves than the larger ones, and the sexton said: "Sir, you know that 'of such is the kingdom of heaven;' and I think that the Saviour is pleased when He sees so much white clover growing around these little graves." But when the minister pressed the sexton for a more explicit answer, he said: "Sir, about these larger graves, I don't know who are the Lord's saints and who are not; but you know, sir, it is clean different with the bairnt." If the sexton was right, if children dying in a state of irresponsibility are safe, and if no proof can be given from any form of Revelation that God gives privileges to dying children which He withholds from living ones, one of

the most interesting and practical questions of the day is, *How to keep the child where Christ has put him.*

Christ says, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." Paul says that the "free gift" has come "upon all men unto justification and life." The *Discipline* says, "We hold that all children, by virtue of the unconditional benefits of the atonement, are members of the kingdom of God, and therefore graciously entitled to baptism." The Baptismal service assumes that the water sprinkled is the "outward and visible sign of the inward and spiritual grace" already given. What spiritual benefit there may be *directly* connected with the administration of the rite, I do not say, because nothing definite has been authoritatively said, but the rite evidently pre-supposes a prior relation and a prior work. Baptism looks back on something already done for and in the child: the unconsciousness of the subject does not alter the fact. The sexton was right, "It is clean different with the bairnt." How then shall we keep the child where Christ has put him?

That there is need for this question, look at the position which children occupy in the membership of the church. Dr. Osborn, in an article on "Our Baptized Children," inserted in the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine* for 1879 (p. 258), says, "The relation of children to the church formed the subject of a paper read at one of the Congregational Union meetings, in 1868. It attracted the attention of a gentleman of that persuasion, and led him to enquire how matters stood. Sending out circular letters to many ministers,

he obtained replies as to the ages of the members of 384 churches in England. The aggregate number of members was 40,374, of whom eighty were under fourteen years of age, or one in five hundred and five; and between fourteen and eighteen years of age, one thousand and forty-five, or about two and a-half per cent. Greatly grieved and dissatisfied with this result, Mr. Mander (recently, I believe, mayor of Wolverhampton), addressed a series of letters to *The English Independent*." He further stated, that out of the 384 churches, there were no fewer than 779 without one child member.

That enquiry, so unsatisfactory in its results, was in 1868. Public sentiment on this point has grown amazingly in fourteen years, and doubtless the denomination represented by Mr. Mander would, if a similar enquiry were instituted, present a different showing. Still, neither British nor Canadian Methodism, so far as I can learn, of those who attend Sabbath School, returns more than one in eight as connected with the church. Take Montreal Conference Returns of last year,—17,000 members, and of these only 1,700 young people; and these returns include all ages within Sabbath-School limits. The children who are returned as members under twelve years of age, do not reach one per cent. of the membership.

Oh, if all the children that rightfully appertain to the Methodist Church were kept where Christ has put them, what a place of "broad rivers and streams" would she then be! What fertility and beauty would

mark the place of her encampment! What a flock of lambs, gambolling in innocence and hope, would vivify her "green pastures!" How "clean different" it would then be with the living "bairnt!" Zion would be a joyful mother of children," and "the little hills" would "rejoice on every side."

And why should not this be? Our Statute Book (p. 28) is explicit. "As far as practicable, it shall be the duty of every Superintendent to obtain the names of the children of his congregation, to form them into classes for the purpose of giving them religious instruction, to instruct them regularly himself, as his other duties will allow. Pray earnestly for them, and talk with them at every suitable opportunity. Appoint a suitable leader for each class, who shall instruct them in his absence, and leave for his successor a correct list of each class, with the name of its leader."

Dr. J. P. Newman says, "We have too long neglected Christ's little ones. His lambs are not fed. Sabbath School teaching and home instruction can never be a substitute for this higher churchly duty. Hereby we can prevent the departure of the youth from the Sunday School and the Church. Pastors, parents, and teachers should teach the children from the earliest dawn of thought that they are Christians, and by baptism they are members of the church. Their formal reception should not be delayed. Pagans are wiser than we. I have often seen parents in heathen temples in Japan and India teach their children to kiss

the idol and throw flowers on the shrine. Home is the stronghold of idolatry, and mothers are the most zealous supporters thereof. This is the secret of the perpetuity of Confucius in the faith of the millions of China. He laid his hand upon the childhood of that vast empire, and its impress abides. Christ did more, but we have done less. The Greek and Roman Churches are wiser than their Protestant sisters. They renew their strength and perpetuate their power by their great doctrine, that their children are born in the Church.

“Let us not be deterred by the fear that this will fill the Church with unconverted, formal Christians. There is some danger here, but not much. Some of our members, converted subsequent to youth, are now formal Christians. They have not developed their spiritual life. With many of us, conversion was a very small beginning, but we have grown in grace. This will be true of the children. Counting head for head, there are more formal Christians among the adults than among the child members. The testimonies of these ‘little ones’ would reflect credit on those of riper years. God comes very near to them, and out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaks. The happiest hours of my pastoral life are when with these child members in class. Childhood is God’s seed time. Let us ‘gather them in—gather them in for Him.’”

Having for some years paid attention to this department of service, perhaps I may be pardoned for refer-

ring to the method which I have been led to adopt. In Quebec and Dominion Square, Montreal, at the commencement of my appointment, I requested the parents of the congregation to give me a list of their children of all ages, according to seniority. This list, which I carefully copied, placed before me the juvenile members of my congregation, and served to give both to the Church and the parents a deeper interest in their spiritual welfare. I then invited all between the years of four and fifteen to meet me on a Saturday afternoon for half an hour. The exercise, in which the blackboard was used, consisted of singing, prayer, a few questions in the First Catechism, and a simple talk about Jesus, with illustrations. It is very significant, that there is nothing so interesting and attractive as "the old, old story."

During my nearly three years' term in Pembroke, several have graduated from my Saturday class to the regular classes of the Church, and been publicly received into full membership; and others, who are still under instruction in the other classes, I meet frequently in a special prayer-meeting on a Monday evening, boys and girls alternately. In these gatherings, all are expected to pray briefly, and time is given for spontaneous questions.

The best efforts, however, may not be all equally successful. Counter influences are strong. "But why should the foe Thy purchase seize?" The property is blood-bought, and it is more precious than rubies. Pastors and parents are the custodians. It is not left

with them to choose to whom the property shall belong. That is a ruled case. "Nurse the child for me," is the command, "and I will pay thee thy wages." A certain parent "accepted his children as the Lord's. At their baptism, he took them from the Minister's arms as the Church's. Of a trust so precious, so solemnly committed, and so sealed, he held himself bound in aftertime to render account. His plan of carrying out that idea was this: So soon as his children reached the age of seven years, he entered their names into his class-book, led them by the hand to the meeting as auditors, and claimed for them recognition as members. If any asked, 'Why should they be in?' his reply was, 'Nay, it is your business to show why they should be out!'" That man was John Collins, one of whose children was Thomas Collins, of sainted memory, whose life, by the late Samuel Coley, is one of the most precious treasures of a Church, peculiarly rich in that department of literature.

"In placing each child's name in the book of the Church," says Samuel Coley, "we do but wisely conform the earthly register to the heavenly. The ecclesiastical acknowledgment is the sequence of the mediatorial. Let holy rites *declare them His*: for reason good—*they are His*." *

III. The next topic merits a larger space than I have allotted to it, viz., The Pastor in his relation to *Personal Visitation*. Chaucer says of the parson:—

* Collins' Life, 6.

“ Benign he was, and wondrous diligent,
And in adversity full patient ;
His parish wide, the houses far asunder,
But he ne'er left none, for no rain or thunder ;
And though he holy was and virtuous,
He was to sinful man not despitous.”

To be a good visitor, heeding “ neither rain nor thunder,” is always a good recommendation, especially to a Quarterly Official Board looking outwards, and materially enhances the marketable value of every order of pulpit ability. I will ask two questions touching this important duty.

1. *How ought it to be done?* And I reply, it should be *microscopic*, both as regards the home and the individual. When stationed in Montreal East, nineteen years ago, some of the streets had the appearance, from a casual survey, of being absolutely French Roman Catholic; but patient investigation discovered a Protestant family here and there, who “ neither food nor feeder” had, and by whom a visit was welcomed as a shaft of genial sunshine on a cloudy, drizzling day. And so of individuals—microscopic pastorizing will reveal shades of character and diversity of need very interesting to a philanthropist, but particularly so to a soul-winner. The late Professor Tholuck had a passion for souls. Speaking of the great crisis of his life, his conversion to God, he says, “ To bring back souls to Christ was from that time the daily, nay, the hourly, *problem*, as well as the *joy* of my life.” The royal Consistory of Saxony issued, in the name of the

clergy of that province, an address of four pages, to the memory of Tholuck. The following is one of its deliverances: "We are only interpreting the feeling of gratitude which lives at this moment in numberless hearts, when we say, that the reason why his labour was blessed to the conversion of so many souls was not to be found merely in the power of the preached Word, which hurried forth from that frail tabernacle with such authority upon the hearts of the hearers; nor in the many-sidedness of his mind, which found no rest till it penetrated the human and the Divine; nor in the spiritual glory which beamed forth from this remarkable man, who was torn and ploughed through and through with sufferings without number, but who was at the same time so assured and immovable in faith; it was to be found in the pastoral faithfulness which laboriously sought and unweariedly wooed souls to Christ, and did so with a hope and patience by which he laid hold on the promise to become a father of many people in Christ. He consecrated all his gifts to this work. His insight into individual character, and even his wit and humour assisted him." What a luminous exemplification of this microscopic dealing with souls, was the man who could say, "Remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn *every one*, night and day, with tears?"

2. Personal visitation should be *impartial*—the poor equally with the rich—the obscure equally with the prominent. Gibbon tells us that Melania

gave to the monk, Pambo, plate, representing 300 pounds weight of silver. She wished to specify the value of her gift, but the monk made a sublime answer: "Do you offer it to me or to God? If to God, He who suspends the mountains in a balance need not be informed of the weight of your plate." If the pastor visits for Christ's sake, he will not be partial in his attentions; he will go where he has reason to suppose the highest value will be placed upon his going, by a Divine assessor. No lowly widow will have occasion to say, as one is reported to have done on one occasion, "The visits of my late pastor always did my heart good, although he never stayed long, not so long as I could have wished. But our present pastor has never visited us, although he has been among us more than a year. Why it is, I don't know; but I suppose he thinks it isn't worth while. You see we are only ordinary people, and I would not think so hard of it either for *myself*; but my children," and she wept as she spoke, "feel estranged, and they say, 'What does he care for *us*? He spends whole evenings in some of the fine houses.' It is this that troubles me, lest my children should become prejudiced against religion." Visiting, like Melania's plate, has its value determined by the spirit in which it is done—to the creature or to Christ. If the latter, the widow will not be overlooked nor the prison visit, and both will be bullion.

3. Personal visitation must be *seasonable*, both as to time and method. I have occasionally found Sbbaath

evening, after the closing service of the day, very seasonable; family all at home, and very accessible after the influences of the sanctuary. As to method, no one needs to know human nature better than the Christian pastor. Prayerful common sense will be indispensable to success.

4. Yet again, visitation ought to be *spiritual*. An enterprising young minister took a guide and called at seventy doors, leaving his card and compliments, and soon after reported seventy calls! "Does your pastor systematically visit you?" was the enquiry made on one occasion. "Oh, no; we would not wish him to do so. He makes us fashionable calls. He knows our minds are settled on the subject of religion." Like pastor, like people! Fashionable calls are not such as the pastor will make who has the apostolic fire within him; nor are they such as infirm and defective humanity needs.

" Some are sick, and some are sad,
And some have never loved Thee well,
And some have lost the love they had,

" And some have found the world is vain,
Yet from the world they break not free ;
And some have friends who give them pain,
Yet have not sought a friend in Thee."

What an embodiment of the spiritual pastor was Paul, "We were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children: so being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the Gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because

ye were dear unto us. * . * As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged everyone of you, as a father doth his children, that ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto His kingdom and glory."*

Imagine this burning, seraphic man calling at seventy doors in one day, and leaving his card and compliments!

I know that some ministers find the work of the study much more agreeable than that of the pastorate.

In this respect they do not resemble a certain cleric, whom I saw frequently in my youth. He was said to be passionately fond of hunting. A Quaker met him one day, and somewhat brusquely said to his sporting reverence: "The hares are fools; were I a hare, thee sho'dst never find me." "Ah! neighbour Broadbrim, where is it? I know every place from the Winn-cover to the Sand-pit." "I would hide in thy study, friend Tally-ho! and lie in form beside thy big Bible." Some pastors would give a hare small chance of secreting itself in their study, for they seldom leave it. The timid creature would be much more likely to be successful were it to take refuge in some of the small cottages and tenements of the pastor's parish.

My second and concluding question is, *Why ought personal visitation to be done?* 1. *It ought, because it is personally valuable.* The young minister who neglected the widow and her family was kindly spoken

* 1 Thess. ii. 7, 8, 11, 12.

to on the subject by one who knew the case, and though he held himself reproved, he had the good sense not to be offended; and the visits which he subsequently paid to that cottage and others like it, were a source of great comfort to himself, and reacted favourably upon the whole of his character and ministry. "Inasmuch as ye did unto one of the least of these, ye did it unto Me." Every visit paid to the disciple is returned by the Master; and when He comes, He never comes empty-handed.

2. It ought, *because it cements attachments*. Bishop Thorold, of Rochester, one of the most active of the English prelates, says in his last charge to the clergy of his diocese, "He who visits best in the week, knows his people best on the Sunday, and deserves to be most at home with them, for he will have won his way into their hearts."* "Mr. So-and-so," said a lady to me the other week, is liked in the pulpit, but not out of it—he never visits. Non-visiting pastors little know how they impoverish their social position and rob themselves of joy.

3. Again, it ought, because it *furnishes material for the Pulpit*. "The Dairyman's Daughter," by Legh Richmond, shews how the press can be enriched by the records of pastoral converse. Though it would have been more honourable had the author of that admirable little work told his readers that Elizabeth Wallbridge was a Methodist, that she was converted through

* Wes., Mag. '82, p. 181.

the instrumentality of that Church, and lived and died in connection with it. We are informed by the Rev. J. B. Dyson, in his history of Methodism in the Isle of Wight, that, on one occasion, a clergyman from a distance, while visiting the grave of the "Dairyman's Daughter," was very lavish in his eulogies of the piety of her whose sacred dust was sleeping in that humble grave. He was observed to gather some flowers which grew on the turf that covered the grave, and carefully deposit them in his pocket. A gentleman, who was present, fell into conversation with him, and asked him if he knew that Elizabeth Wallbridge was converted among the Methodists, and that she lived and died a member of that Christian Communion? The clergyman listened with blank astonishment, and as he turned away in evident disgust, he was observed to drop the flowers on the ground. The charm was dissipated. Master, we saw one casting out devils in Thy name; and we forbade him, because he followeth not with us. And Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not: for he that is not against us is for us. Betty Wallbridge, once giddy, trifling, and talkative, was truly converted to God, and furnished by her life, experience and death, what many cases of a similar character have done, abundant material for both the pulpit and the press. David Saunders, "the Shepherd of Salisbury Plain," immortalised by Hannah More, was another case in point.

If the pastor occasionally gives Society Addresses, as did the early Methodists, after the Sabbath evening

service, the materials gleaned by personal visitation will be invaluable. The biographer of the Rev. Joseph Entwisle says that he frequently gave these addresses and carefully prepared for them. The topics embraced were private prayer, devotional reading, Sabbath observance; the relative duties of husbands, wives, parents, children, masters, servants, and heads of families; fatherly counsel to the young and inexperienced, with respect to company, conversation, and reading; recent revivals of religion, &c. These meetings of the society were well attended; they endeared him to the people,—led them more highly to value Church membership; and contributed in a high degree to the stability, Christian consistency, spiritual improvement, and consequent enlargement of the society. In his journal he often refers to the comfort he felt when thus meeting “the family of God.”* I have now and then conformed to this old Methodist usage; but its present necessity, as a demand of the times, seems to me to be so urgent, and its value so great, that I mean, by God’s help, to be more systematic in its observance.

4. It ought, because it *adds to the congregation, and tells upon the Methodist loyalty of the people.* “A house-going minister makes a church-going people,” has passed into a proverb. Facts prove this. The preacher that knows the people in their homes on the week-day is sure to have

* Life—377.

some one to preach to on Sunday. Backsliders will be reclaimed,—the indolent and supine will be quickened,—the methodistically lukewarm will have their attachment cemented,—the membership leakage will cease, and the whole Church will feel the magnetism of the preacher's living presence. "We cannot," as Wm. Arthur pregnantly remarks, "as Methodists, educate antipathies,"—we cannot teach our people to avoid and dislike other denominations, as may be done toward us; "but we can educate convictions and attachments; and, in the long run, they are stronger as well as holier. We ought, henceforth, to set ourselves to educate convictions and attachments as we have never yet done."

5. Finally, we ought to practice *Personal Visitation*, because it meets cases of spiritual need. Listen to what John Stuart Mill said in his 21st year: "From the winter of 1821, when I first read Bentham, and especially from the commencement of the 'Westminster Review,' I had what might truly be called an object in life—to be a reformer of the world. My conception of my own happiness was intensified with this object. But the time came when I was awakened from this as from a dream. It was in the autumn of 1826. I was unsusceptible to enjoyment or pleasurable excitement; one of those moods when what is pleasure at other times becomes insipid or indifferent; the state, I should think, in which converts to Methodism usually are when smitten by their first 'conviction of sin.'" In this depressed state of mind he

continued for six months. All his notions of happiness were shattered like a house of cards. But he had no one to guide him. His sceptical training had led him to reject the Bible and Jesus; and after groping in the dark like "an infant crying for the light," this momentary state of conviction passed away. His philosophy was of no service to him, and John Stuart Mill came out of this crisis of his life unchanged. What a blessing to that young man, and to all whose life he subsequently touched, had some Methodist pastor, during that crisis, led him to Jesus! And what John Stuart Mill felt during those six months, young enquiring minds all around us feel at one time or another.

While in the St. Andrew's Mission, and visiting a somewhat remote section, I called upon a blacksmith who had fallen from grace. For months he had not opened his Bible, and had induced his wife to renounce her Church membership. He was a good-looking man, in the prime of life, and a most correct and musical speaker. I invited him to the evening service in the church. He came, and was restored. Both he and his wife were benefitted, joined the Church, and gave evidence of a devout life. Last May, while visiting Lachute, and having a Sunday morning at liberty, I was driven over to the appointment where this transaction took place. No one was expecting me. I wished to feast my eyes with the scenery of other days, and look again into familiar faces. The preacher was in the pulpit when I entered the church.

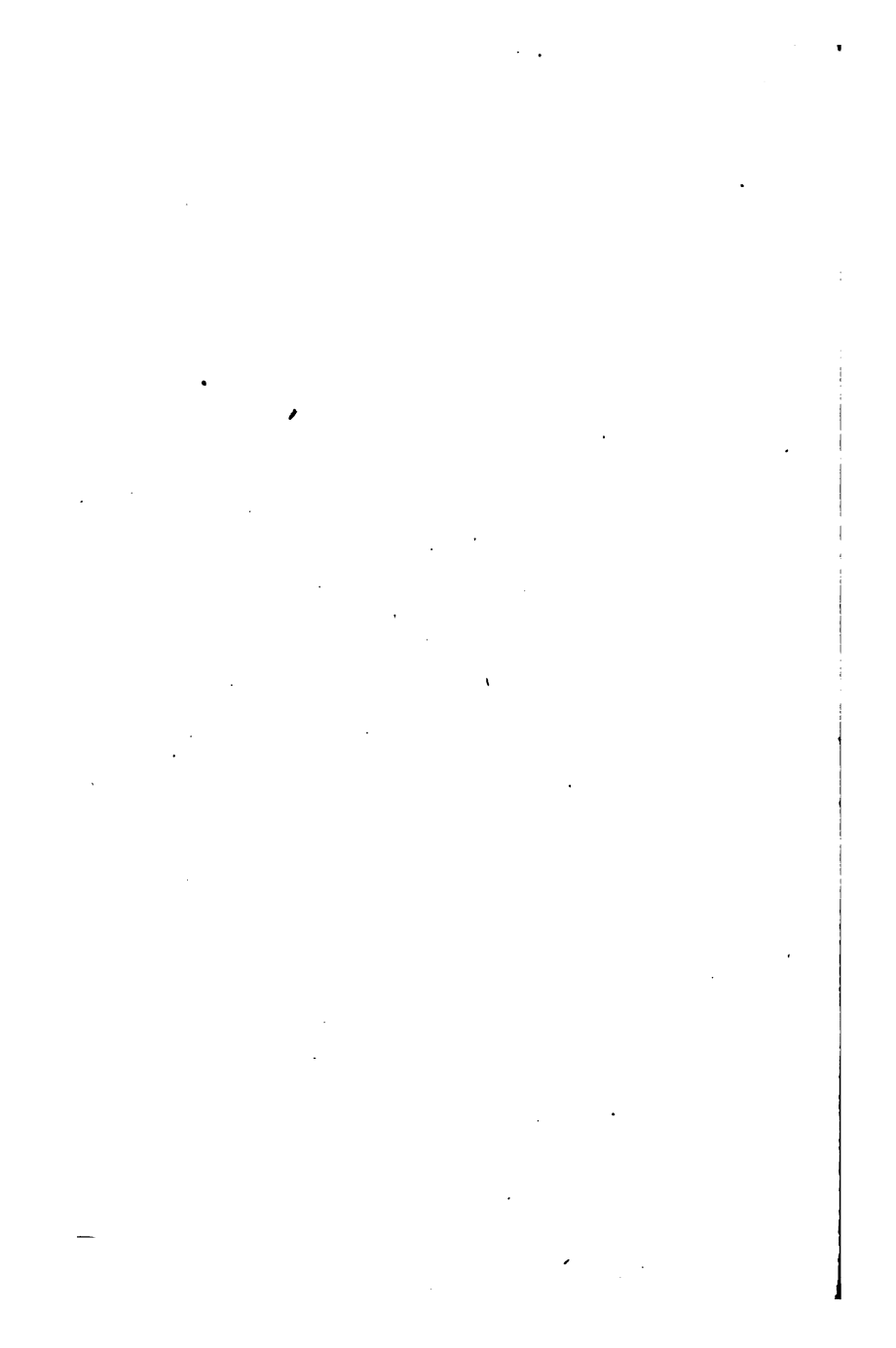
He courteously invited me to speak. I gazed intently into every face, but twenty-two years had almost entirely changed the *personnel* of the congregation. The only face that I distinctly recognized was my blacksmith friend of former days. He was the Recording Steward of the Mission, and its principal supporter.

"Cast thy bread upon the waters,"—the bread of pastoral prayer and counsel, the bread of sympathetic tears and earnest labour—"for thou shalt find it after many days."



LECTURE IV.

SOUL-WINNER.



LECTURE IV.—SOUL-WINNER.

TWENTY-FIVE years ago, just before leaving my native circuit for Canada, I wrote and published a tract, entitled "Souls and Stars." As the number printed was not large, and the circulation principally local, I shall feel free to use some of the thoughts of that publication as being germane to my present topic. And I shall not be debarred from doing this by the fact, that a certain preacher of another denomination, in a volume of sermons recently issued, representing the pulpit of his church, has appropriated the most of the publication in question, and passed it off as his own, without making the slightest acknowledgment.

The topic of the present lecture is the *Soul Winner*. In discussing it, notice First, the *winner* ; Second, the *work* ; Third, the *conditions of success* ; and, lastly, the *motives to action*.

I. Two points I would emphasize in the *Winner*.
1. *He must have strong sympathy for his work.* A lazy workman once listened to the striking of the clock,—it was late forenoon,—he carefully followed the strokes until they reached eleven, when the gong ceased ;

evidently disappointed at the numerical result, he exclaimed, "O thou dumb clock, do strike another stroke." Another stroke meant an hour's freedom from work. That man was paid by the day; his work sat lightly upon him; he was a hireling, filling up the time was the primary object, not the quantity and quality of the service rendered. The true soul-winner has no relation to this dawdling, soulless class of workmen; this "Come day, go day, God send Sunday," class. He has a living interest in his work. His model is the workman who said, "I must work the works of Him that sent me while it is day." The workman whom, whether in conversing with the ingenuous woman of Samaria, or in opening the eyes of the man born blind; whether in unravelling the sophistry and malicious plans of the Pharisees, or in raising the body of the dead; whether blessing the "little ones," or instructing the aged,—the workman whom nothing stopped, whom nothing swerved,—resolute enemies, unfaithful friends, fearful Gethsemane or terrific Calvary, but the earnestness of whose purpose intensified as the difficulties of his path thickened. "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!"

Many have studied this concentrated example of force, until they have become imbued with a portion of its power. Paul studied it; step after step did he toil through the perils of his rugged career, exclaiming, "this one thing I do, for me to live is Christ, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do

count them but dung that I may win Christ." Henry Martyn studied it. Weakly in constitution, he nevertheless threw himself into the perils of the mission-field in sultry India. In a certain place he was told that he could not live long, he was sure to die. "How long," said he to his physician, "do you suppose I shall live?" "Seven years," was the reply. "Oh! seven years," replied the angelic man; "how much good I may accomplish if I live seven years!" Dr. Coke studied it. When in the coach, with his young missionary companion, the Rev. Benjamin Clough, on their way from London to Southampton, there to join the ship which was to waft the one to heaven, the other to India, Mr. Clough was struck with the various objects of interest on each hand, and, after silently admiring for a time, he called the attention of his senior companion, but the only reply of the devoted man as he gazed steadily before him was, "*My heart is dead to everything but India.*" Like his great Master, all the pulsations of his being were for perishing man; and He who put them there, before he reached the end of his voyage, said, "It is enough; come up hither," and the servant and the Master, sympathizingly one on earth, were in the course of two or three months rejoicingly one in heaven.

2. But the *Winner* must have not only sympathy for his work, but *be willing, cheerfully and believingly, to make sacrifices for it*, sacrifices of income, of genial society, and if needful, of reputation. And in maintaining this spirit of sympathy and sacrifice, he will

not have the impression that he is committing, even in a temporal respect, a breach of prudence. Allen Gardiner and his pioneer missionary band, wasting away for want of food on the iron-bound coast of Terra del Fuego, were kings. Lying alongside the bleached bones was the diary, in which the hand of Gardiner had feebly scrawled, "I have now been four days and four nights without food or water, but, blessed be God, I have felt neither hunger nor thirst. I would not exchange my present position with that of any one on earth." There spake grandly one of Christ's soul-winners! "And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my Name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life." Did that man commit a breach of prudence, who "went forth, not knowing whither he went?" Or that other one, who esteemed "the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt?" Or that one, "who counted not his life dear unto him?" Or that, of a still later day, who for half a century bore reproach for Christ? Did not Abraham become the father of many nations? Was not Moses permitted to see "God's glory;" and when he died, did not God bury him? Could not Paul say, 'Having nothing, yet possessing all things?' And did not Wesley, in "age and feebleness extreme," lift his dying arms in token of victory, exclaiming, "The best of all is, God is with us," and then, passing away, left the Methodist Church as the magnificent legacy

of a marvellously fruitful life? The soul-winner, in the prosecution of his work, may not have poured into his lap the cherished rewards of earth. His material remuneration may be comparatively scanty, but he has, what the affluence of this western hemisphere cannot buy, peace of conscience, the approval of Jesus, and the daily bestowments of a living and limitless Providence.

It was once my privilege to attend a Missionary Meeting at which the late Rev. W. J. Shrewsbury, of saintly memory, made the following statement: "When I was in my twentieth year, a providential door was opened for my entering upon the missionary work—a work which had long been an object of desire. But when I reflected upon the circumstances in which I was placed, the probability of my entering that door appeared to be quite gone. I was the eldest of a large family, all of whom were dependent upon their parents for support. I stated these things to my mother, and told her I could not think of leaving them, when I had come to years capable of rendering them assistance; but with much feeling she said 'William, you *must go*; the Providence which has called *you*, will provide for *us*. Go, in the name of the Lord.' I went; my mind distressed on account of the family. But while upon the coach, the passage came with peculiar force, 'every one that hath forsaken father or mother, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundred-fold.' Instantly the distraction within me gave way to peaceful confidence, and I was

assured that the Lord would provide. I embarked upon the ocean; reached in safety the place of my destination; laboured with some degree of success; the excellent person whom I afterwards married was converted in a foreign land through my instrumentality; after becoming the father of seven children, and for twenty years enduring perils by water and perils by land, I had the happiness once again to embrace my aged parents on my native shore; and now, blessed be God, they, along with the whole family, are safe beneath my own roof at Bradford."

God's promises are as stable as the pillars of heaven. The soul-winner who trusts them will find them so. When I determined to devote myself exclusively to this work in Canada, the words of the prophecy came to me, "I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones." And while on one Mission, where \$240 covered my entire income the first year and \$280 the second, the prophecy was as beautifully true as when surrounded by circumstances of a more lucrative character. Young men, do the Master's bidding! Work to-day in the vineyard, and the "penny" which He gives will do. God's little is better than the world's much. Some of the happiest homes in the universe are the homes of soul-winners.

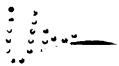
II. In glancing, secondly, at the *work* of the soul-winner, profitable and stimulating reference might be

made to its value in promoting individual comfort, social order, and national well-being,—in securing the best forms of civilization, pure thought, and good morals. The great central argument, however, for the peerless value of the *work*, lies in the soul itself. Christ puts it in the two-fold unanswerable question, “What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” No reply can be given to these questions. The loss of the soul admits of no compensation. And under the whole heavens there is no work comparable to that of securing its safety.

I have already alluded to Professor Tholuck and his work as a soul-winner. D'Aubigné, the historian, says of him: “By means of Tholuck, God has turned the most numerous and the most infidel of the German universities into a school of prophets.” . . . “And to what did Tholuck owe his success? Simply to this: He tried to convert his students to God. On the 2nd of December, 1870, the fiftieth anniversary of the commencement of his theological career was celebrated at Halle. Half a century before, he stood almost alone, misunderstood, broken down in health, but with a heart glowing with love to Christ. When he was coming to Halle, and was almost overwhelmed at the greatness of the work which lay before him, a friend encouraged him with the words: ‘Fear not, for they that are with thee are more than they that be with them.’ And so it proved; for now he was understood

and loved, in the midst of a mighty host which had been in that half-century trained by him for the service of God. The whole scene was a triumph of faith. Deputations came from the Universities and the Church authorities. The Emperor (then King), who was at the head of his armies in France, sent Tholuck, from Versailles, the Star of the Red Eagle order, and the Empress also expressed her interest in the commemorations. Tholuck looked back on the struggles and victories of the fifty years past, and told the secret of his success. 'Most of you are my friends,' he said, 'my friends in Christ; of many I may perhaps also say, my children in Christ, whom I have brought forth with pain. I will therefore speak a few words from my heart. My life has been designated a 'life full of blessing to youth,' and I should be robbing God of His glory were I to deny this. But mine has not been merely the blessing of Apollos, which is given to many, to nurture and cherish and water. It has also been the blessing of Paul: to plant life in dead hearts. But this can be done only when the Spirit of fire is present as Bearer of the breath of God. With adoring wonder, I thank God that from the moment when I received the baptism of fire, this Spirit of fire has been in my heart; and that has made my work easy. When I knew nothing aright of true religion, God brought me in contact with an aged saint whose heart was a dwelling-place of Christ. From that time the only passion of my heart has been Christ. Every one that did not know Christ

was looked upon by me as a fortress that I had to take for my Master. Even before I became a Professor, this impulse had taken possession of my soul. I was only seventeen years of age when the Lord made me the means of converting a soul. It was an artillery officer, who was by birth a Jew; a wild creature who had wandered about in the world without aim and without rest. But he became soon such a decided disciple of Christ that he put me to shame. And so the work proceeded, my body dying, while still I live. And when I look back upon the thousands whose hearts have opened to my word, I have still no room for boasting; for a 'necessity' was laid upon me to preach the Gospel, and my heart exclaims, in reviewing my success, 'It is the Lord who did it.' . . . Among the frivolous ones was once a young man whom a mother had laid on my heart, but who soon got among companions who led him quite astray. His course was one of regret, relapse, new regret, and ever again relapse. I have visited him at six o'clock in the morning, because he was to be found at no other hour at home. I have gone to him in prison to remind him of what he well knew, but seemed always to forget. Once, however, in the course of a sermon, I said: 'We preachers should have hard work were it not that we have, even in the heart of the most hardened, an ally which says, whilst we are preaching, 'The preacher is right.' The next evening I received a letter from him, saying: 'Now I know that God's word has an ally within my heart. He has also



spoken to me.' The young man promised to give up bad company and commence a new life. But four or five days afterwards I received a card from him with the words: 'Tholuck is sighing, Tholuck is praying, but I am drinking away again.' But it was not in vain. Now he is a distinguished preacher in an important city."

The open secret of Tholuck's earnestness and success lay in his nearness to Christ. The Redeemer of the soul and the winner of the soul had become one. The work of the one, in a most important sense, was the work of the other. The joy of the one was the joy of the other. John Angell James had put this work where Tholuck had put it, and for the same reason. After a service equally lengthy he wrote: "It is now some consolation to me to recollect that amidst innumerable defects, I have in some measure ever kept in view the conversion of sinners as the great end of the Christian ministry. I started in my preaching career, while yet a student, with this before my eyes, as the great purpose for which I entered the pulpit. This I have kept in view through a ministry of half a century. This I now look at, with undiverted eye, in the latter scenes of my life; and, taught both by my own experience, and by observation of all I have seen in the conduct of others, were I now beginning my course instead of gradually closing it, I should most deliberately choose this as my ministerial vocation, and consider that my official life would be about almost a lost adventure if this were not in

some good measure its blessed result. In the pursuit of this object, notwithstanding all my defects and imperfections, I have had my reward. I speak thus not in a way of boasting, but of gratitude, and for the encouragement of my brethren in the ministry, especially its younger members. God will never suffer those altogether to fail in their object who make the conversion of souls their great aim, and who employ in earnestness of prayer and action His own methods, and depend upon His own Spirit for accomplishing it.

“Ministers may think too little of this now, and the work of conversion be lost sight of too much, in their eager desires and ardent ambition after popularity and applause; but the time is coming when these, except as they gave a man a wider sphere for his converting work, will be thought worthless and vain. Amidst the gathering infirmities of old age and the anticipations of eternity—much more at the bar of Christ and in the celestial world—it will be deemed a poor and meagre reflection to a minister of Christ that he was once followed and applauded by admiring crowds. The knowledge then that he had been the instrument of converting a single sinner from the error of his way, and saving a soul from death, will be worth more than the applauses of a world, or the admiration of an age; and is an honour for which the crown of royalty or the wreath of victory might be bartered now with infinite advantage. Then, amidst the scenes of the last judgment and the splendours of immortality, they who have been most eager in seeking,

and most successful in obtaining, the richest distinctions upon earth, shall confess that '*he who winneth souls is wise*,' and shall see that those who turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars forever."* When the Rev. Theophilus Pearson, a promising young Methodist minister, knew that he must die, he exclaimed, "Oh, that I could only preach another sermon!"

III. What then may we suppose to be the *conditions of success*? If this work is peerless in its demands and awards, how may we best respond to it? What ought the soul-winner to be, what ought he to do?

1. First, he must be a man of *piety*, of "clean heart." All the motive power of the soul pure as a heavenly sunbeam. Everything gone that ought to go. This is the kind of manhood, complete in all its spiritual proportions, that honours God, and of which the Church and the world have just now pre-eminent need. The Holy Ghost will not work extensively through an agency not thoroughly in harmony with Himself. The ceremonial purity of the Jewish Temple service was symbolic of the spiritual purity of the Christian Church. A breach in the one case was as fatally obstructive to Divine communication, as it is in the other. Personal holiness sought after, not as a means to an end, not as a stepping-stone to usefulness, but yearned after, and enjoyed for its own sake, as the normal and necessary condition of the Christian

* Intro. Spencer's Pastor's Sketches.

man,—*personal holiness*, I am persuaded, and never more so than now, lies at the foundation of personal usefulness. “For he was a good man and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord.”

2. Again, he must be a man of *prayer*, mighty *prayer*. Not the cold, formal, round-about, perfunctory kind of prayer, which would not regard itself as orthodox, if it did not include in its devotional catalogue the quickening of believers and the conversion of sinners, and which, when it has travelled over its customary range of topics in measured order, complacently subsides into the conviction that duty has been fully discharged. *Not that*. The incessant knocking of the man who needed the three loaves, and who got them because of his knocking; the importunity of the widow who sought redress of the unjust judge, and who obtained it because of her importunity, are inspired types of the liturgy that God honours. It is the “fervent, effectual prayer;” the impassioned, sustained, and unwearying importunity, that takes hold of God and will not be said, Nay. That is the prayer that fore-runs and pre-supposes signal showers of grace. Look at Abraham. Step after step does the patriarch rise in his humble and disinterested importunity on behalf of the doomed city; and step after step does Divine tenderness promptly follow the suppliant. God lingers until Abraham has done. “I will not destroy it for ten’s sake,” is the emphatic assurance to the final,

"Peradventure ten shall be found there." Look at Moses "in the gap," on behalf of his rebellious charge; and Omnipotence, as though fettered and bound by the voice of man, cries out, "Let me alone, that I may destroy them." Look at Jacob, during the stillness of that memorable night, when there "wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day." The evening sun set upon Jacob, the suppliant; the morning sun rose upon Israel, the prince. Look at Daniel, the man greatly beloved, with his "three full weeks" of "supplication" and "ashes;" and at One greater than Daniel, who spent the hours of the live-long night in prayer amid the solitude of the mountains. Look at John Livingstone, and the five hundred souls converted to God under one sermon which he preached at the kirk of Shotts. "I never preached ane sermon" afterwards said that good man, "which I would be earnest to see again in wryte but two; the ane was on ane Monday after the *communion at Shotts*; and the other on ane Monday after the communion at Holywood; and both these times I had spent the whole night before in conference and prayer with some Christians." Look at Bramwell, who habitually spent six hours out of the twenty-four on his knees, and then need we wonder at the burning series of apostolic revivals which he carried through his circuits? Look at James Turner. "The last week in January, 1860, Turner left Peterhead, set his face toward the West, crossed over into Banffshire, and made his way to Portnockie, a fishing-town, with

1235 inhabitants. On his arrival he asked for the use of the town-hall ; this was granted. He then began to call upon the people, family by family, to invite them to the service. At the door of James Findlay's cottage, Turner was met by this question : 'Are you the man Duncan Matheson promised to send ?' 'No ; but I am sent. God has sent me.' In that cottage three men had been wont to meet after the public services on Sunday evenings, and, when possible, on Wednesday evenings, to read a book called *The Power of Prayer*, and to intercede for Portknockie. After praying thus several weeks, it occurred to them to ask Duncan Matheson to give them a service. He came, preached one evening, and departed, promising to do his best to send them a man who could stay longer. Meanwhile the three continued in prayer and supplication, waiting for the man whom Matheson promised : and hence the question with which Findlay greeted Turner : and hence also much of Turner's success.

"Findlay soon told his two praying friends that the man had come. One of them sent his son through the town with a bell, announcing the service in the town-hall. Three hundred came ; the hall was filled ; men and women were much struck by Turner's first prayer, and equally impressed by his weighty appeals based upon the words, 'Who is on the Lord's side ?' But though they listened with breathless interest there was no visible fruit of this first service. The three praying friends and a few others followed

Turner to the house where he was to sleep, but there was no sleep for any one. After supper they began to pray, and *continued all night in prayer to God.* The next day Turner spent in visiting from house to house; and in the evening the crowd which came to the house was so great that they had to hold the service in the Free Church. This was on Saturday evening. He preached on Sunday and again on Monday evening. At the close of the service on Monday the congregation lingered, as though unwilling to go home. Seeing this, Turner said, 'Dear people, if there are any of you anxious about your souls, I will meet you in James Findlay's house.' 'And straightway many were gathered together, inso-much that there was no room to receive them; no, not so much as about the door.' And then, in that house, the power of God came down, and shortly every one, save Turner himself, was smitten to the earth. Some lay as if dead; and all were prostrate and helpless. Findlay, on finding his own house full, had taken a group of enquirers into a neighbour's cottage; and whilst conversing and praying with them, a woman in hot haste rushed in and cried, 'Rin, Finla, rin, for they are a' either deed or deeing in your hoose.' Findlay ran, and when he reached his house he gave a look in fearingly, and was almost paralyzed when he saw the prostrate condition of all except Turner. The young man who had rung the bell was among the stricken ones. Speaking of it, he said, 'I lay about an hour unable to move; and then, just as

James Turner laid his hand upon my shoulder and said, 'Jesus died for you,' in a moment the burden rolled off my soul, and, filled with gladness, I flew out of the house, knocked up the neighbours, and told them what God had done for me.' "

" O wondrous power of faithful prayer !
What tongue can tell the almighty grace ?
God's hands or bound or open are,
As Moses or Elijah prays :
Let Moses, in the Spirit groan,
And God cries out, ' Let me alone ! ' "

3. Again, the Soul-winner must have *Directness of Aim*. "For God's sake," wrote Fénelon to one about to be consecrated a bishop, "do not do your work by halves." My impression is, that if we preached for souls, souls would be given to us. To a very considerable extent on this subject, our desires are the measure of our success. Of Alleine, author of the "Alarm to Unconverted Sinners," it is said, that "he was infinitely and insatiably greedy of the conversion of souls; and to this end he poured out his very heart in prayer and in preaching." Bunyan said, "In my preaching I could not be satisfied, unless some fruits did appear in my work." "I would think it a greater happiness," said Matthew Hale, "to gain one soul to Christ, than mountains of silver and gold to myself. If I do not gain souls I shall enjoy all my other gains with very little satisfaction, and I would rather beg my bread from door to door than undertake this great work." Doddridge, writing to a friend, remarked,

"I long for the conversion of souls more sensibly than for any thing besides. Methinks I could not only labour but die for it with pleasure." Archbishop Williams, Lord Keeper in the time of Charles I., is reported to have said: "I have passed through many places of honour and trust, both in Church and State, more than any of my order for seventy years before. But were I assured that by my preaching I had converted one soul to God, I should therein take more comfort than in all the honours and offices that have been bestowed upon me." David Brainerd could say of himself on more than one occasion, "I cared not where, or how, I lived, or what hardships I went through, *so that I could but gain souls to Christ.* While I was asleep I dreamed of these things; and when I awaked, the first thing I thought of was this great work. All my desire was for the conversion of the heathen; and all my hope was in God." John Smith said, "God has given me so powerfully to feel the value of precious souls, that I cannot live if souls are not saved. O give me souls, or else I die!" One of the latest utterances of John Angell James was, "Never at any former period of my life was I more impressed with the idea that the conversion of souls is the great end of the Christian ministry. Everything short of this I feel to be utterly unsatisfying." Of R. M. McCheyne it is said, "that he watched for souls as the fisherman's wife trims her lamp in the window and watches for the storm-tossed and belated ones in the offing. He hoisted the light of Calvary,

and like Harlan Page, it was his life's joy to welcome the returning wanderers into the 'covert from the tempest.' " *

Directness of aim—earnestness and singleness of purpose—tells. Every grade of mind, even the learned and philosophic, are moved by it. The celebrated Dr. Priestley said of Thomas Mitchell, one of the first Methodist preachers, a man of slender abilities and of defective education, beneath whom the Dr. had unintentionally sat as a hearer, "This man must do good, for he aims at nothing else." The Rev. Edward Smith, one of our ministers in England, who has just won the first prize of fifty guineas on "The Church's Relation to Evangelistic Work," is himself an evangelist of power, and the following incident stands in connection with his work: "One night, when a bitter east wind was blowing, he commenced singing in the street as he used to do in his student life, when a woman, thinking that he was a tramp, came to him and offered him a penny. Of course he declined it, and gave her an invitation to come to the special services. A little further a man, at a public house, took pity on him, and saying it was not fit to turn a dog out on such a night, collected twopence-halfpenny to pay for a night's lodging for him; but a boy who recognized him said, 'Why, he's the Methodist preacher?' But that rough work paid, for the people believed that he was in earnest as he stood singing alone at the corner of the street, and pressed them to

* Cuyler's Model Minister.

come to the house of God. The result was that scores of the Lincolnshire people, amongst whom Mr. Smith was then labouring as District Missionary, were brought under the word, and the power of God fell upon them mightily."

Brothers, whatever else you may be, *be earnest*,—*be anxious for fruit*. This Christ-like singleness of purpose will give force to your character, power to your ministrations.

4. Again, another condition of success absolutely indispensable, is *Holy Ghost power*. Without this, a great deal can be done; but the *great* thing will not be done. Congregations may be gathered, the community harmonized, but no one will be converted,—no soul will be raised into newness of life. The breastplate of the priest may glitter with stones of value and of beauty, but if the *Urim and Thummim* be absent, there will be no living response; there will be no voice; the Divine Oracle will be dumb.

But may not the devout, prayerful, earnest Soul-winner look for this? Have we reason to believe that on the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit was partially withdrawn from the Church? That that marvellous display of power was a solitary instance of special intervention,—a phenomenon in a miraculous age which the Church has no right to see repeated? Have we reason to look upon the 3,000 which the Holy Ghost convinced and converted in one day, as a monument, or a type,—as a monument illustrative of what He *could* do, or as a type of what He was wil-

ling to do down through all time? Which? Let us go back to the records of that memorable day, and see if we can find anything that may help us on this point. "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." But how long will the Divine gift be continued? Will not the precious boon be taken away from us as soon as the Feast of Pentecost is over? No. "The promise is unto you, *and* to your children, *and* to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

Is this our faith? Do we believe that the power which transformed 3,000 men of "like passions" with ourselves in one day, is still in the Church? Let the displays of grace recently witnessed on both sides of the Atlantic, and in the distant islands of the Pacific, give evidence. Just as easily as the Spirit silently and noiselessly clothes nature with beauty and fertility after the sleep of winter, so silently and noiselessly can the same Spirit fill the Church with life and power. This subtle, pervasive influence, competent to effect this day the conversion of every man in this Dominion, is in the Church at the present moment. Revivals of religion are not "few and far between" because the Spirit's arm is shortened. Christianity is not withered and scorched with worldliness and formality because the Spirit's power is limited. Were the proper conditions now present—and those conditions are with the Church—the Holy

Spirit could, in a space far shorter than that which transpires between the depth of winter and the height of summer, clothe the moral desert of both hemispheres with the beauty and bloom of immortal vegetation.

No man is an ordinary man, the burden of whose heart-cry is the *Cross of Christ*, and whose resources are the *inexhaustible energies of the Holy Ghost*. Instruments humanly weak can be made divinely strong; and men very common-place and ordinary can be dilated into men of extraordinary mark and influence. The rulers of this world, strong in prestige, counsel, and confederation, have again and again felt their essential littleness and weakness in the presence of such men as these. "Now, when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and 'uncultured' men, they marvelled and took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus."

IV. By what *motives*, then, shall we be stimulated in this peerless work of *soul-winning*? 1. Our success *will shed lustre upon the Church we represent*. It matters little what the numbers of a Church may be—what its wealth,—what the beauty of its sanctuaries,—what the attractiveness of its ministry,—what the grandeur of its ceremonial,—what the perfection of its order,—it matters little what its name or position,—the Church, by whose instrumentality no sinner "is turned from his iniquity," is a dishonoured Church,—a crestfallen and humbled Church; and so

far as its great mission is concerned, as useless amongst the trees of God's vineyard, as a blasted oak in a living forest of beauty, freshness, and sunshine. On the contrary, no matter how poor and small and unpretending a Church may be, if it seek and save the lost,—if it make wretched men happy men,—guilty men forgiven men,—lame men sound and leprous men clean,—that Church bears its own credentials, the heraldry of heaven floats upon its blood-stained ensign, and the diadem of Him, upon whose head are many crowns, sparkles on its brow. The powers of this world may confront and oppose; but these living epistles of Christian force and enterprise which she bears triumphantly along with her, puzzle and confound them. As it was in the days of the Jewish Sanhedrim, when Peter and John were summoned before them, so it is now. "Beholding the man that was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it." The day before Pentecost the disciples were little known and much despised, but the conversion of three thousand souls some fifteen or eighteen hours later, carried the names of the Galilean fisherman and his companions to the limits of the Roman empire. A Church stands high when her sons are "as plants grown up in their youth," and her "daughters as corner-stones polished after the similitude of a palace."

2. Again, *the vitality and perpetuity of a Church depend upon the conversion of souls.* Many years ago, scores of young people from ten to fifteen years

of age were brought to God in my native place. With swelling hearts, and brimming eyes they sang the hosannas of the Lamb. The accession to the Church of these "little ones" was regarded by some as being a very doubtful gain. If, however, a few years subsequently, you had taken away from the Church of that day the children converts of a former one, you would have taken away most of the key-stones and corner-stones of the building,—you would have taken away the flower and strength of that detachment of the King's service,—you would have taken away the very backbone of the Methodism of that locality.

Over two hundred years ago, a pedlar sold a lad a tract called the "Bruised Reed," which led to his conversion. And in this incident you will mark how the hidden life of the Church is propagated,—how one genuine convert swells the vital pulsations and augments the giant energies of the Church. That lad was Richard Baxter. Baxter's writings were the means of rousing, amid scores and hundreds of others, the soul of Philip Doddridge. Philip Doddridge's "Rise and Progress of Religion" was the means of quickening that illustrious advocate of the slave, William Wilberforce. William Wilberforce's "Practical Christianity" brought Legh Richmond to Jesus. Legh Richmond's "Dairyman's Daughter" has brought multitudes to the footstool of mercy. There were in November, 1856, in the records of the Tract Society alone, fifteen hundred cases of conversion attributable solely to the circulation of that little book. Now,

could we extinguish the results of Baxter's conversion,—could we blot from the records of the Church those who have lineally sprung from the loins of that single Puritan, during the last two hundred years, we should pluck thousands upon thousands of sainted ones from their spheres of light in heaven, and thousands upon thousands of devoted ones from their circles of usefulness on earth. New converts stand in the same relation to a Church that lambs do to a flock: they supply the waste which is constantly taking place, and they constitute the elements of future strength and increase. Suspend conversions, and you sap the sources of a Church's perpetuity

3. Again, *the conversion of souls gains the highest prize.* What is it to save a soul from death? Can any one accurately give the product of that sum, the meaning of that quantity? The distinctions of this world, and its almost superhuman achievements, are not to be compared with it. Could we rise to the possession of a princely fortune, and have ducal honours shed upon us, and have the million looking up and admiring our elevation,—*the conversion of a soul would be greater than that.* Could we indefinitely augment the empire of science, and incalculably enrich the treasures of art, *the conversion of a soul would be greater than that.* Could we build and munificently endow a hospital of palatial grandeur and proportion,—*the conversion of a soul would be greater than that.* Could we heal all manner of disease, and were we to

go through the length and breadth of this western continent, giving strength to the infirm, eyesight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, soundness to the lame, health to the sick,—could we thus fill thousands of suffering homes with joy; and roll down the valleys, over the hills, and across the plains of this fair land, one loud and gathering song of thanksgiving and love,—could we do all this, the *conversion of a soul would be an achievement infinitely loftier!* Death will soon enshroud the body, and the general conflagration will by and by consume the world; but the soul shall “flourish in immortal youth, unhurt amidst the war of elements, the wreck of matter, and the crush of worlds.”

How is it,—when we think of the marvellous change which the grace of God makes in the man,—when we think of a life of love and contrast it with a life of enmity,—when we think of a death of peace and contrast it with one of doubt;—*how is it*,—when our eye glances fearfully into the dimness and bitterness of an eternal storm, with its remorseful tones of irretrievable loss;—*how is it*,—when our ear drinks in the ravishing melody of Eden, and we catch a momentary glimpse of the beautifully happy and holy ones that wander there “midst flowers that never shall fade or fall;”—*how is it*,—when we hear of God strangely becoming man, when we read of Gethsemane’s agony and Calvary’s ignominy; *how is it*,—that the soul’s grandeur and destiny do not overpower every other impression,—that we do not rush forward “with cries,

entreaties, tears to save, and snatch it from the gaping grave,"—that we can suffer any petty pursuit or momentary worldly consideration to dull our ear to the cry of perishing ones, or divert us from the great end for which God himself wept and suffered? The question is a practical one of far-reaching spiritual import. Thorough sympathy with the Redeemer would solve it.

4. Finally, *The conversion of the soul has in reversion an inspiring recompense.* "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." Earnest Christian labourers never die! Their deeds of spiritual chivalry are handed down from father to son. When names of mere mental power and ministerial talent are waning from the memory, the names of those who have succeeded in turning "many from their iniquity" are as familiar as household words. Nelson, Bramwell, Stoner, John Smith, Thomas Collins, Wm. Carvosso, are names almost canonized; they are embalmed in the great heart of Methodism, and will become increasingly odoriferous as the God-like work of winning souls rises in general estimation. In the passage just quoted, we have two classes of persons and two degrees of reward. One class is to shine as the firmament; their individual lustre will not be so strikingly apparent; but blended one with another they will constitute a luminous field, a magnificent "milky way" of light and glory. Such is figuratively represented

as being the future of wise and good men. The other class are to shine "as the stars;" there will be a distinctive character about them; their glory will be prominently observable; they will strike and rivet the gaze in a moment; high up amongst a universe of stars will they glow and sparkle as the never-waning but ever-brightening constellations of heaven. Such is the reward of those who turn many to righteousness.

Let us imagine, then, that the *Day* has come, "the last Day, the Day for which all other days were made." The great white throne has come down; the Judge is seated; the "books" are opened; there afar off burns the world, with its dockyards and warehouses and shipping, with its cities and palaces and temples, with its halls of commerce and literature and science, with its fields and forests and mountains;—here stand, gloomy and anxious, the millions who sought, and sought only, earthly wealth, and human honour, and creature good: how little and poor and unworthy seem now those men of former influence and ascendancy! But who are these princely ones that stand out so conspicuously from that shining throng on the right? Lofty in their stature and glittering in their retinue, who are they? Here, God-like in their proportions, stand the twelve Apostles; here is Peter, the Apostle of the Circumcision, with the thousands of Pentecost behind him; here is Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles, with crowds clustering around him from many lands. Members of Cæsar's household